



Mahavir Seva Trust Presentation

The Moral Stories of **Bhagwan Mahavir**

Vol. 3 Rs. 20.00



HERITAGE STORIES FROM UTTARADHYAYAN SUTRA & GYATA SUTRA

The Moral Stories of **BHAGWAN MAHAVIR**

Bhagwan Mahavir was a famous spiritual leader of His times. He brought many revolutionary changes in the prevailing religious beliefs and traditions. The most prominent among them was the equal rights of pursuing the spiritual path regardless of cast or creed. He also allowed females and lower caste people to study religious literature. In order to pursue what he preached, He started delivering His religious sermons in the language of the masses, Prakrit-Ardhamagadhi, instead of the rich literary language Sanskrit. Because of His use of the common language, people from all sections of the society used to attend, listen to and follow his sermons according to their abilities.

His style of discourses sermon was liked by all. The complex and serious principles of religion were explained by Him through practical illustrations. This lucid expression went directly to the heart of the listener. The sermons of Bhagwan Mahavir which are available to us today in Ardhamagadhi (Prakrit) language are known as "Aagam" or "Ganipitak".

We have presented here some moral stories compiled from His sermons in "Uttaradhyayan Sutra" and "Jnatasutra". We are sure our readers will find this collection interesting and inspiring.

The book has been compiled by the scholarly Acharya Shri Devendra Muni ji based on "Jain Kathayen" written by the well-known author of hundreds of books Upadhyay (Professor) Shri Pushkar Muni ji. We express our profound gratitude to them.

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DISTRIBUTION OF WORK

There lived a clever and wealthy merchant called Dhanna in Rajgriha. He had a happy family of four sons and their wives.

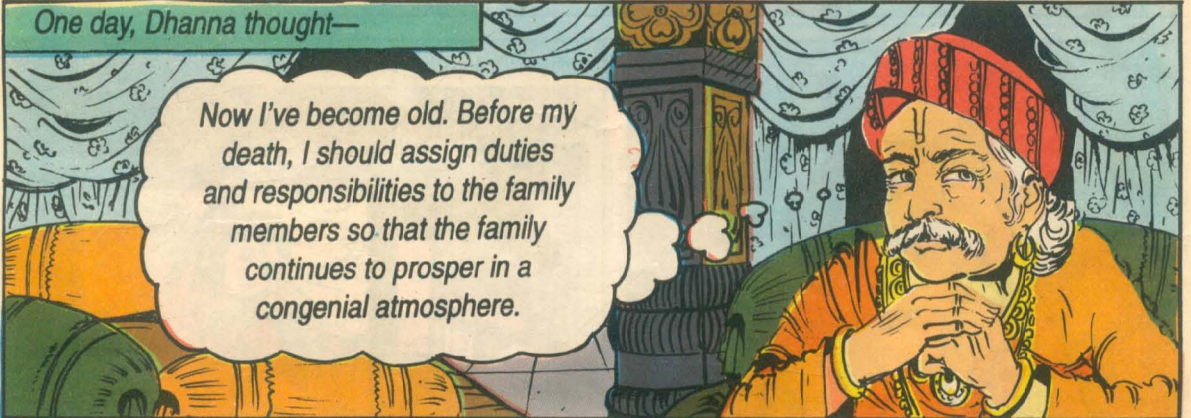
नम्र सूचन

इस ग्रन्थ के अभ्यास का कार्य पूर्ण होते ही नियत समयावधि में शीघ्र वापस करने की कृपा करें, जिससे अन्य वाचकगण इसका उपयोग कर सकें.



One day, Dhanna thought—

Now I've become old. Before my death, I should assign duties and responsibilities to the family members so that the family continues to prosper in a congenial atmosphere.



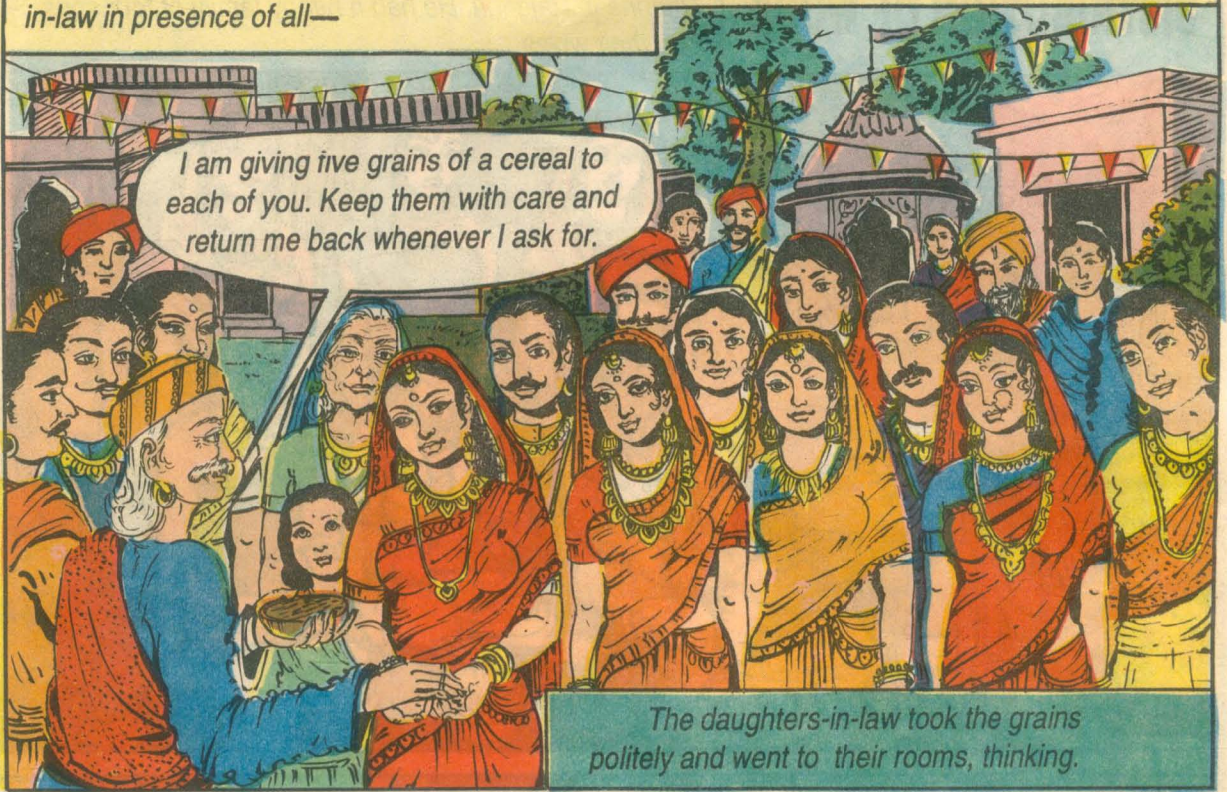
At the outset, he decided to hand over the household responsibilities to his daughters-in-law. He was wondering about the way the duties could be divided.



I should test the calibre of these ladies and accordingly assign the duties.

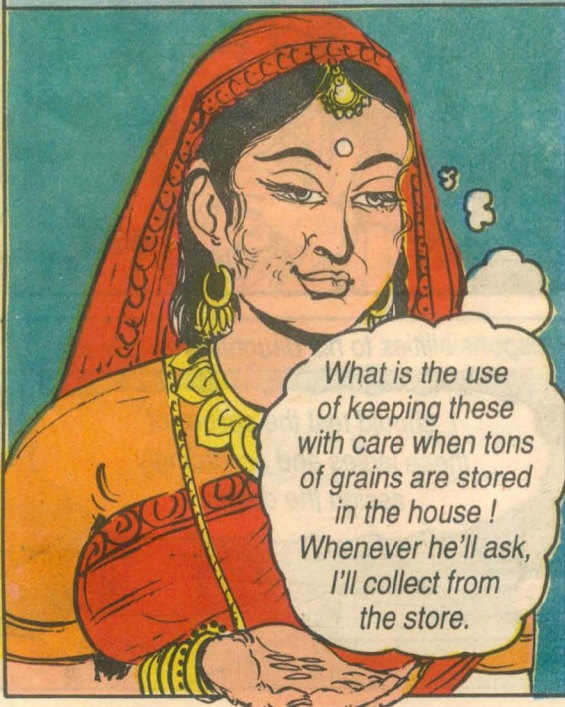
Dhanna thought of an intelligent way to test their calibre.

A few days later, Dhanna arranged a party for his kinsmen. After the feast he told his daughters-in-law in presence of all—



The daughters-in-law took the grains politely and went to their rooms, thinking.

The first daughter-in-law, Ujjhika, took it very lightly —

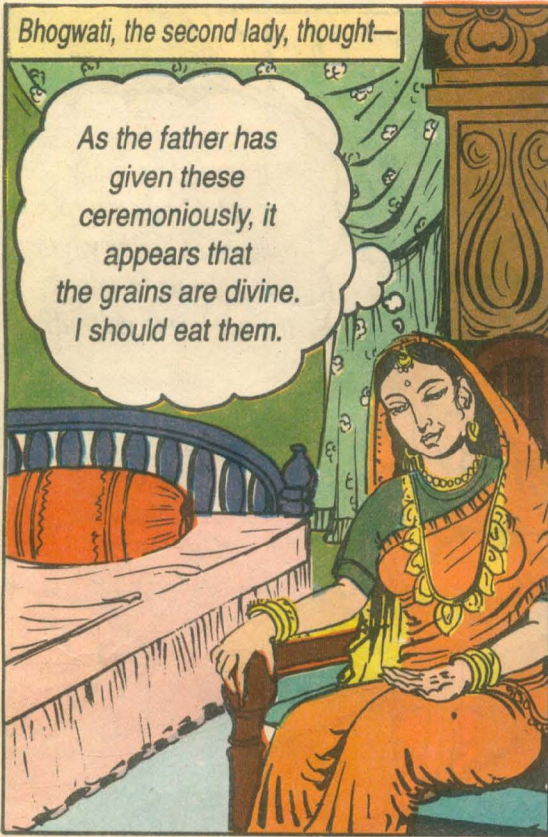


She threw away those grains.



Bhogwati, the second lady, thought—

As the father has given these ceremoniously, it appears that the grains are divine. I should eat them.



And Bhogwati consumed the grains after cleaning them.



The third daughter-in-law, Rakshika, too, had similar thoughts—

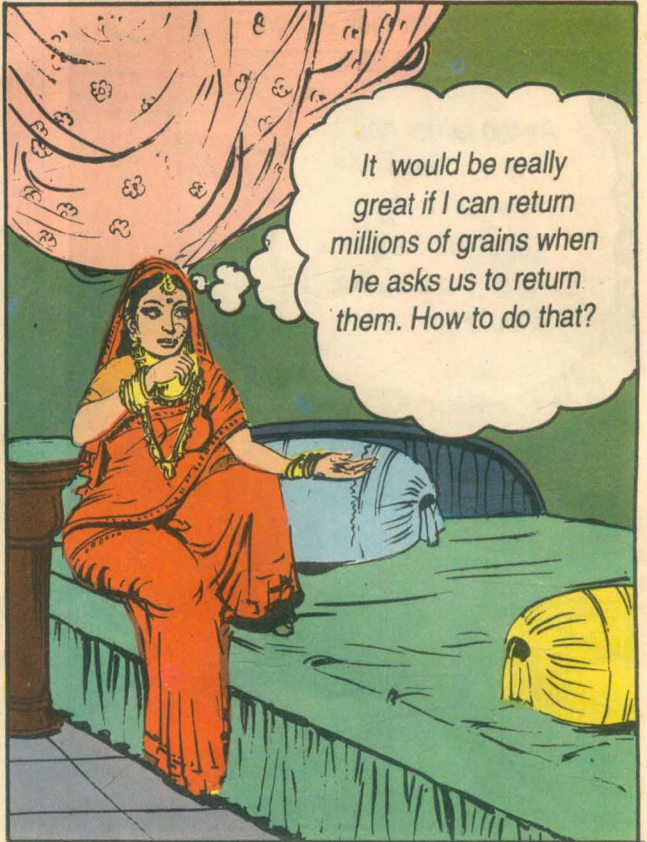
As we are told to keep them with care, these must be miraculous grains.



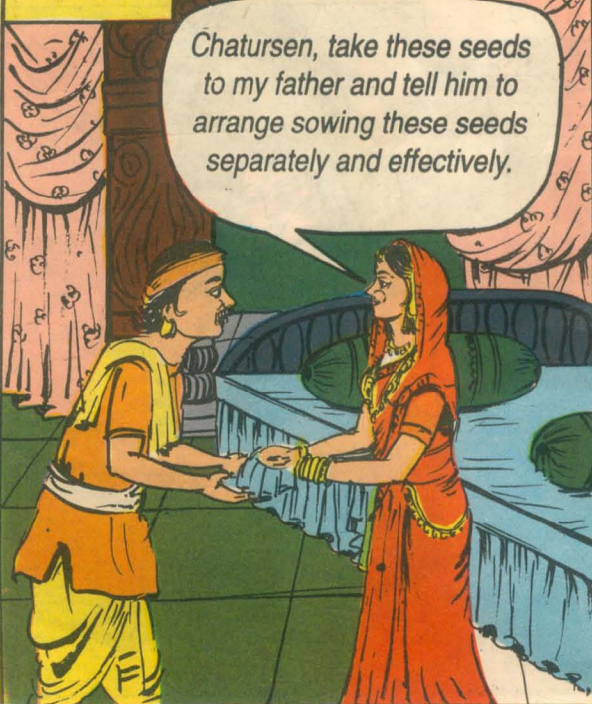
She was very wise. She tied them in a fine cloth and kept in a safe.



The fourth daughter-in-law, Rohini, was very smart. She thought deeply —



Rohini called her faithful servant Chatursen—



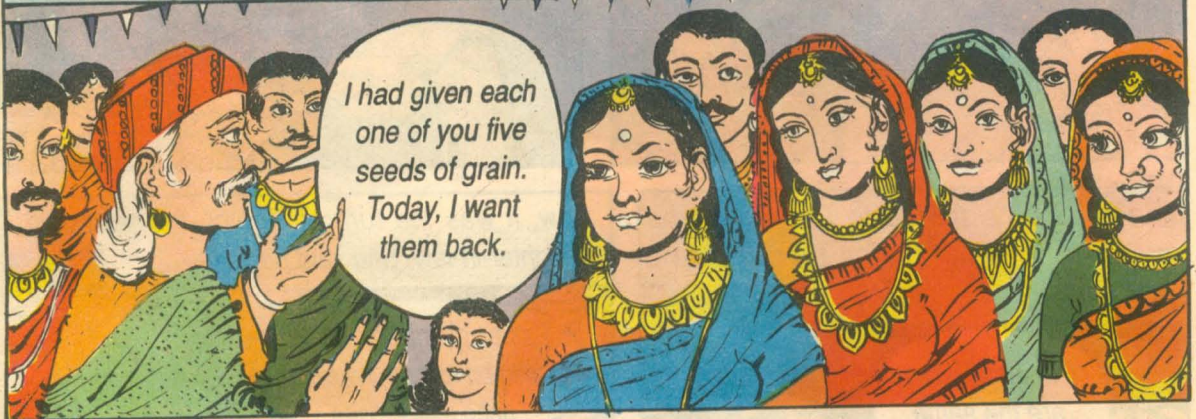
Chatursen reached Rohini's father's home and gave her message. The father arranged for its separate sowing.



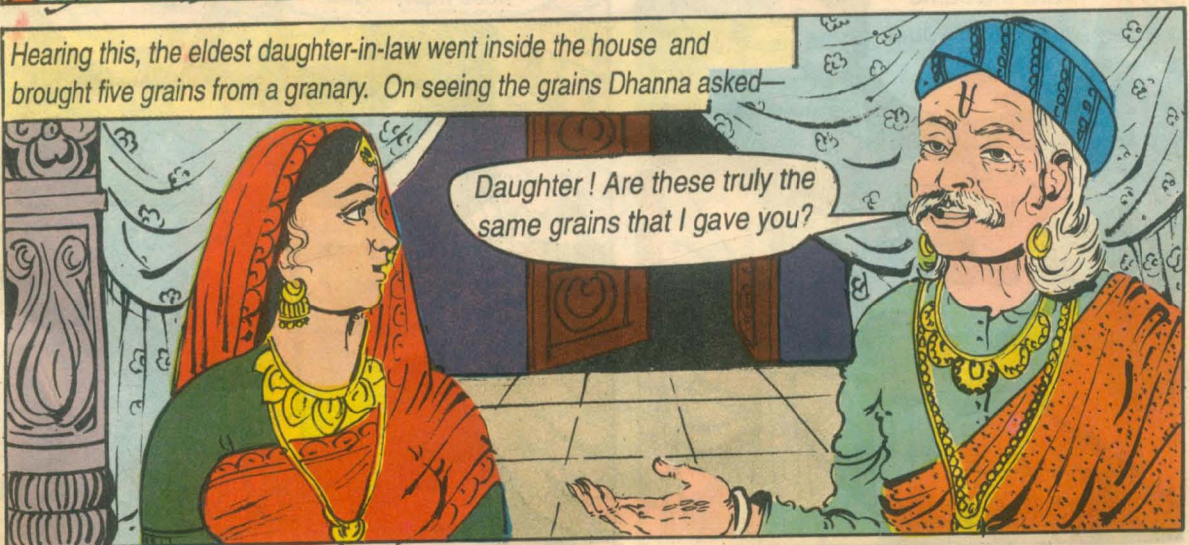
After four years, Dhanna recollected the past incident.



Once again, a similar gathering was arranged. After the meal, Dhanna asked all the four daughters-in-law in front of all the family members—

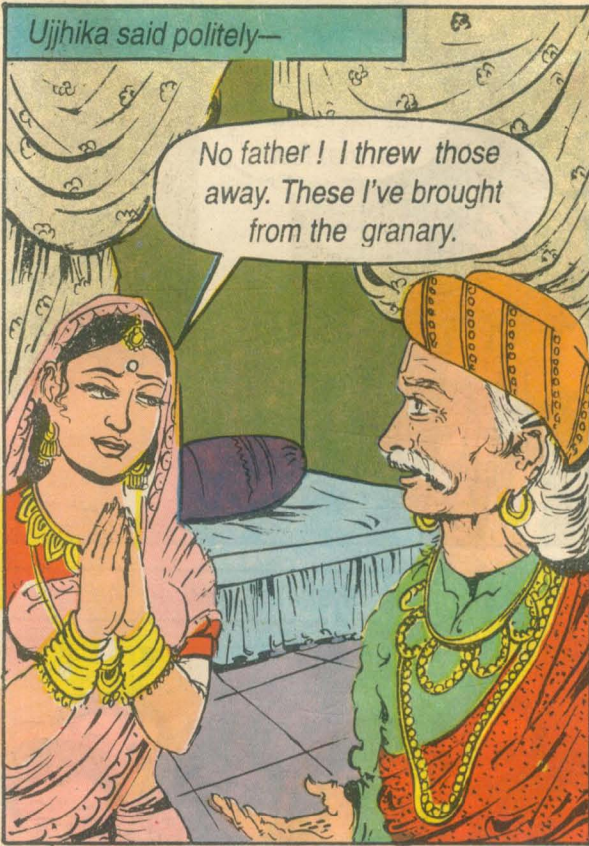


Hearing this, the eldest daughter-in-law went inside the house and brought five grains from a granary. On seeing the grains Dhanna asked—



Ujjhika said politely—

No father ! I threw those away. These I've brought from the granary.



When Bhogwati was asked, she too, brought five grains from the granary. When asked, she said hesitatingly—

Father ! I ate those grains.



When Dhanna turned to Rakshika, she promptly took out grains from the safe and said—

Father ! These are the same grains that you'd given me.

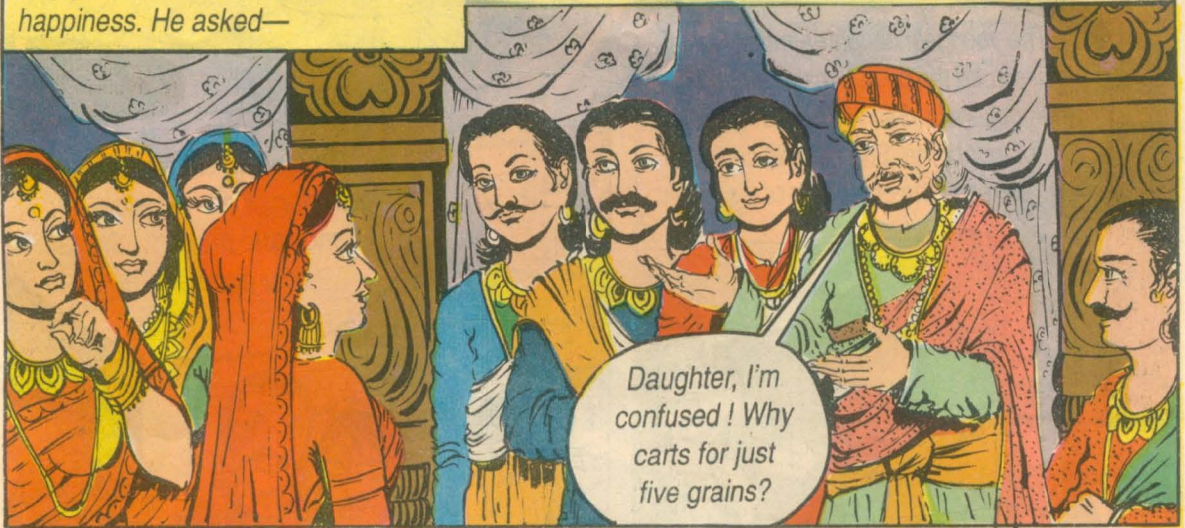


Now, it was the turn of Rohini, the youngest daughter-in-law. She said politely—

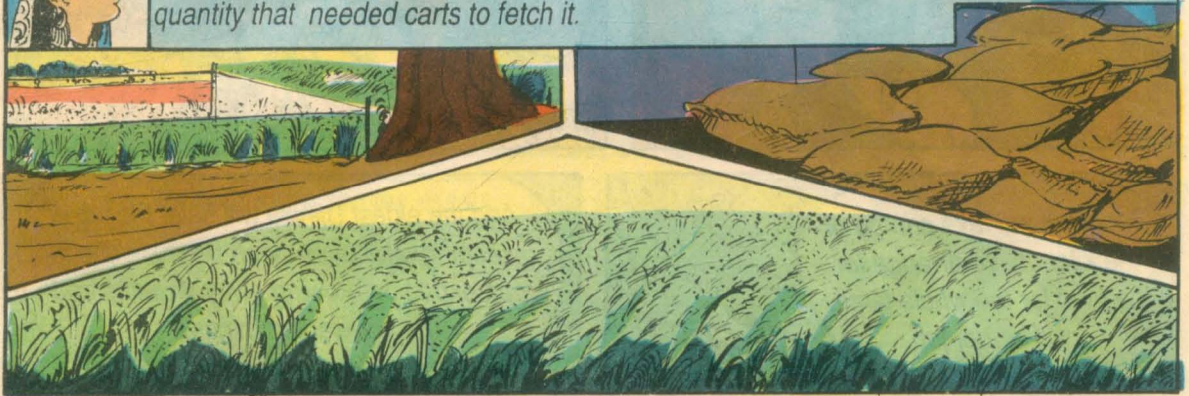
Father, grains are ready, but to bring them here, we need many carts



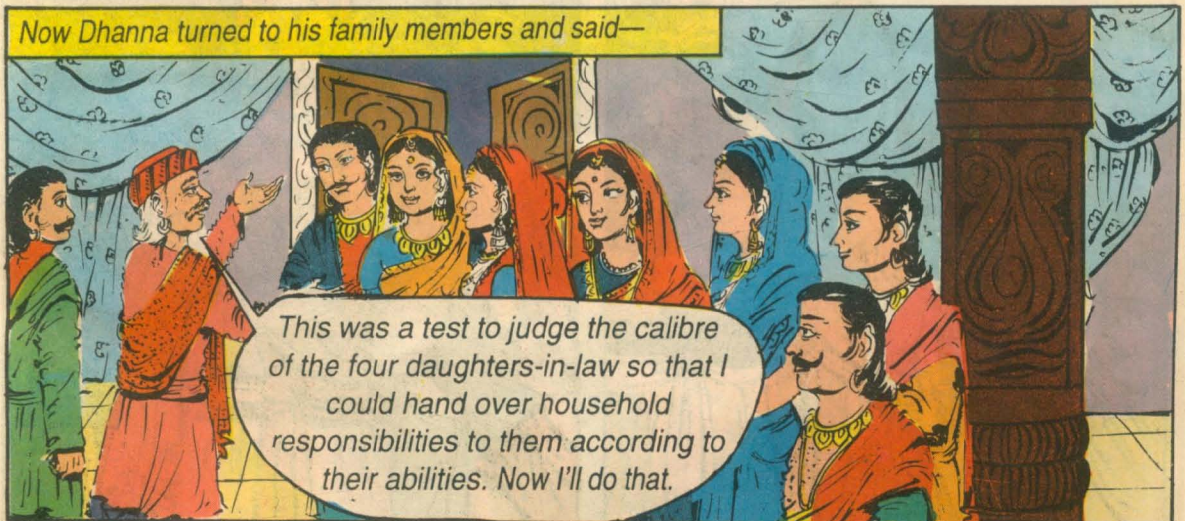
Everyone was surprised to hear this. On Dhanna's face also, there was surprise mixed with happiness. He asked—

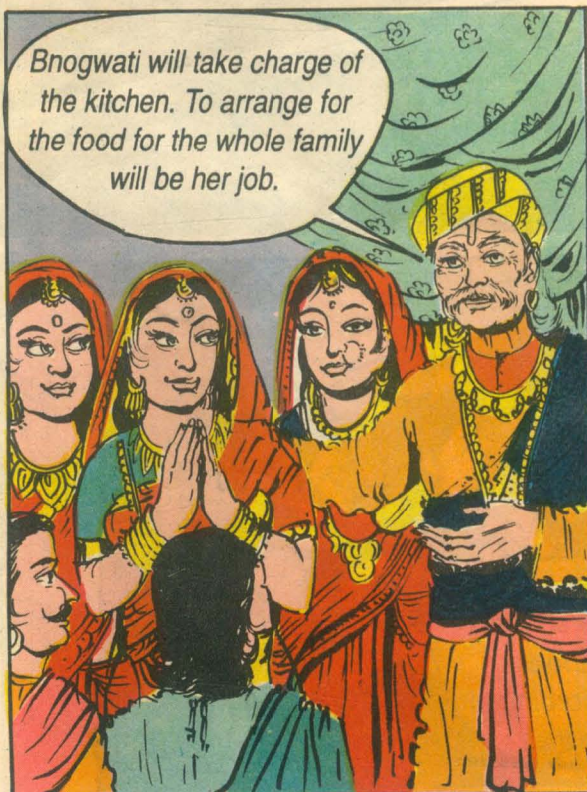
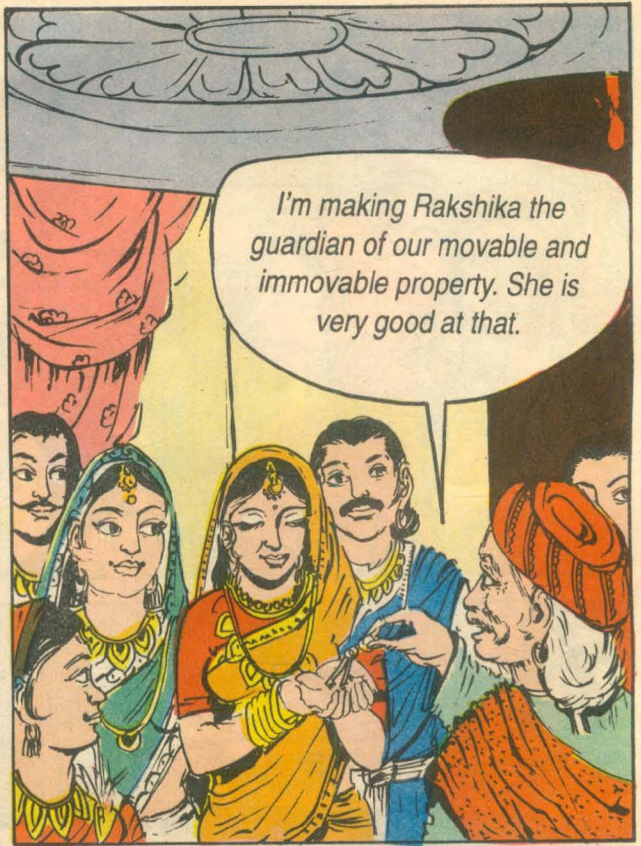
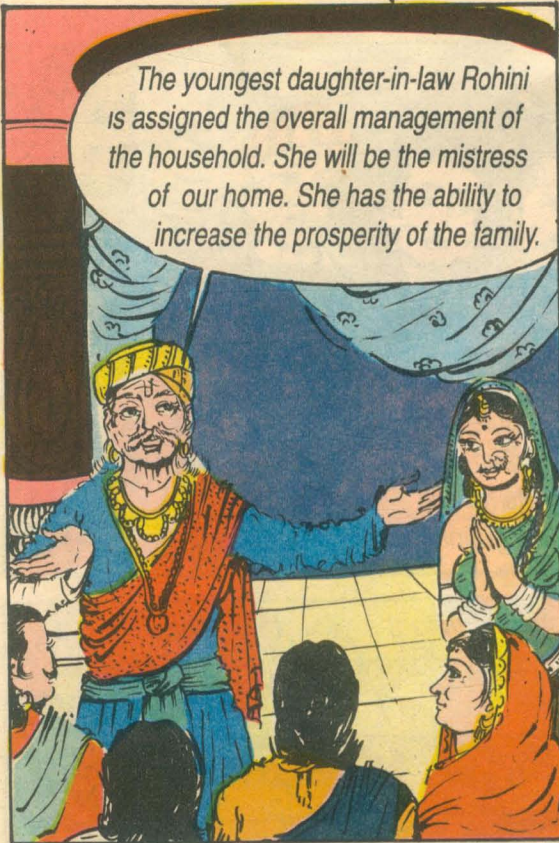


Rohini narrated the story in detail about how during the past four years she got the grains sowed and re-sowed in her father's farm and how they grew into such a large quantity that needed carts to fetch it.

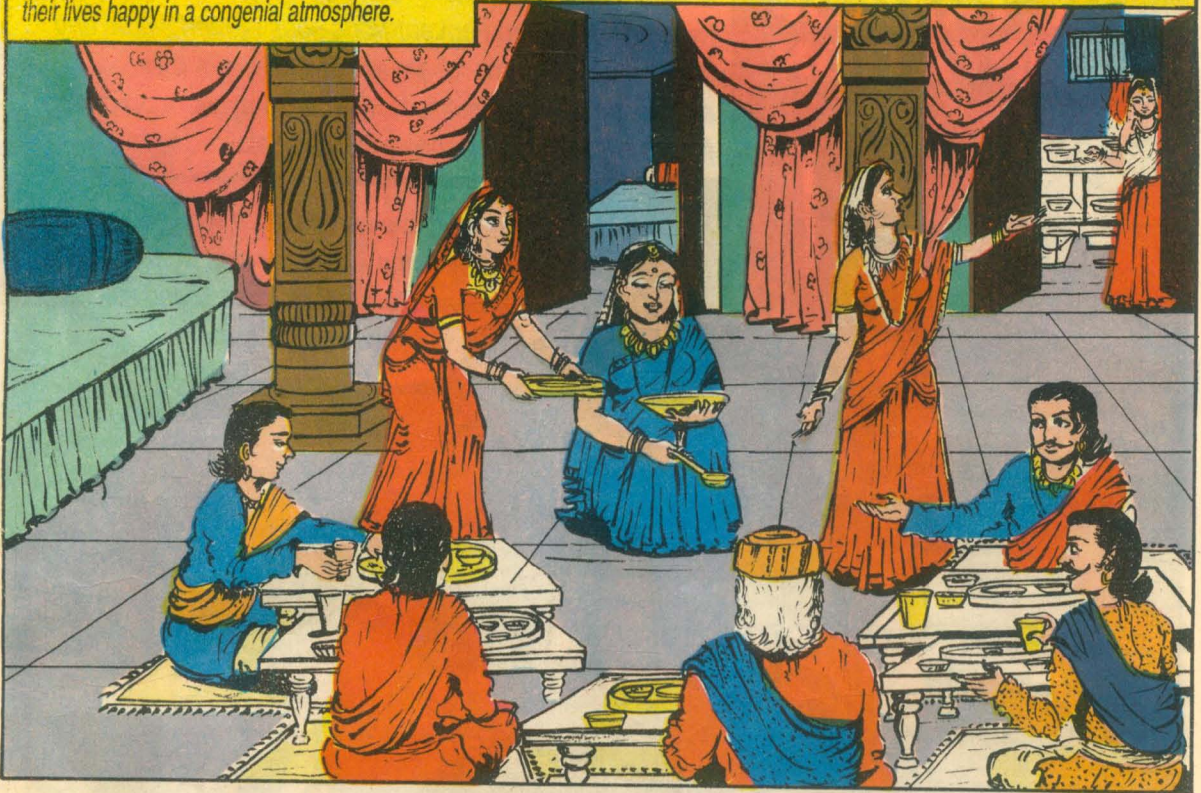


Now Dhanna turned to his family members and said—

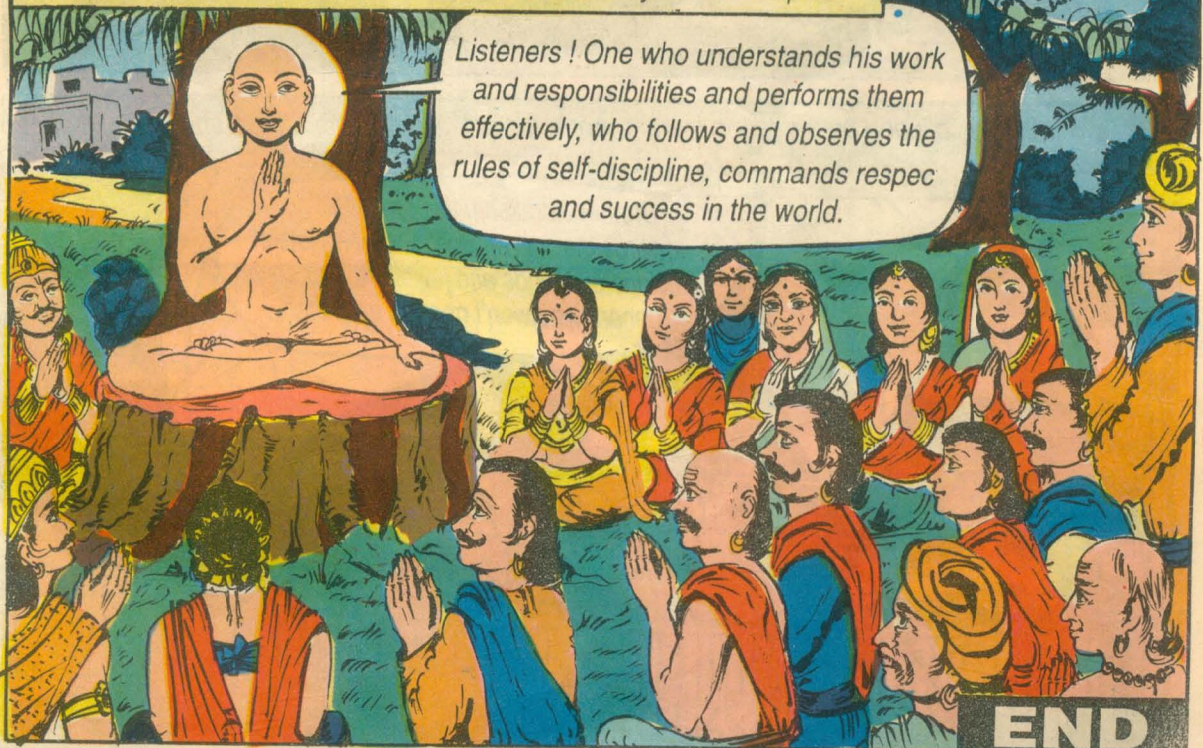




This way, on being assigned the duties according to their abilities, the four ladies managed the household activities effectively making all their lives happy in a congenial atmosphere.



Bhagwan Mahavir explained the essence of the story to His disciples—



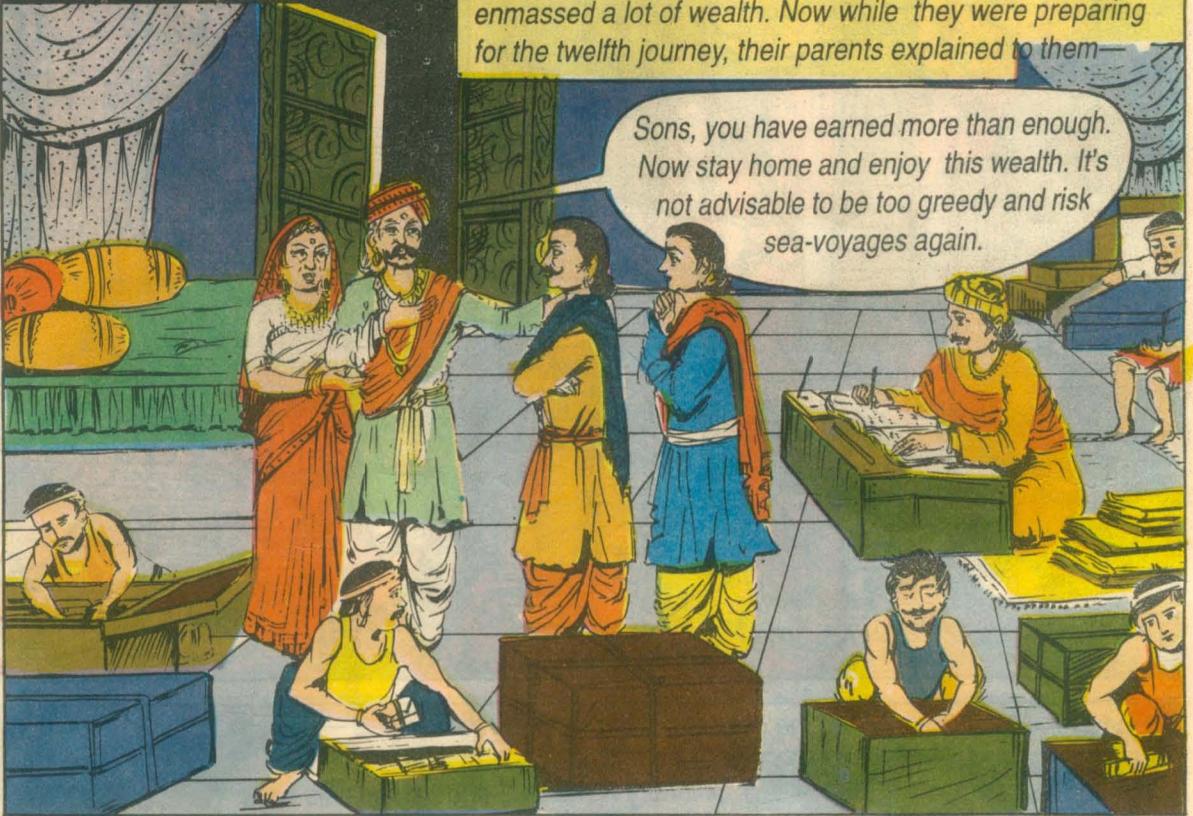
Listeners ! One who understands his work and responsibilities and performs them effectively, who follows and observes the rules of self-discipline, commands respect and success in the world.

END

THE TRAP OF TEMPTATION

A sailor named Makandi lived in Champa Nagari. He had two very clever and adventurous sons named Jinpal and Jinrakshit. By means of eleven sea-journeys they amassed a lot of wealth. Now while they were preparing for the twelfth journey, their parents explained to them—

Sons, you have earned more than enough. Now stay home and enjoy this wealth. It's not advisable to be too greedy and risk sea-voyages again.



The two brothers, blinded by the greed to earn more, did not listen to the advice and set out for their sea-voyage.

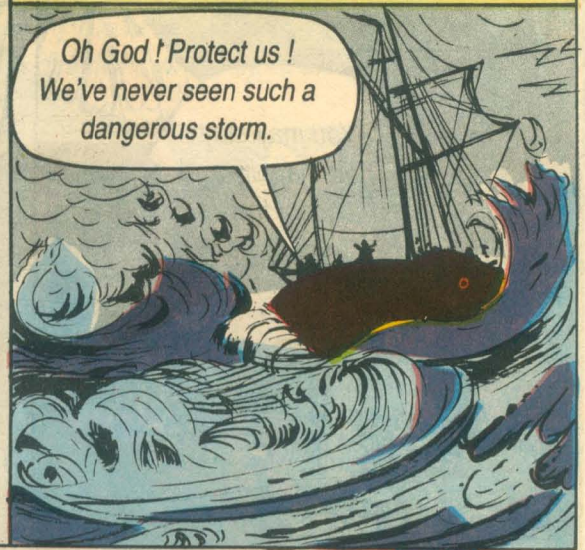
Brother Jinrakshit, this time we'll go towards the 'Lavan Sea' and bring lots of precious diamonds and jewellery. Our seven generations won't need to earn then.



Cutting through the waves, their vessel was moving ahead to the Lavan Sea. Suddenly, dark clouds appeared in the sky bringing thunderstorm and lightening along.



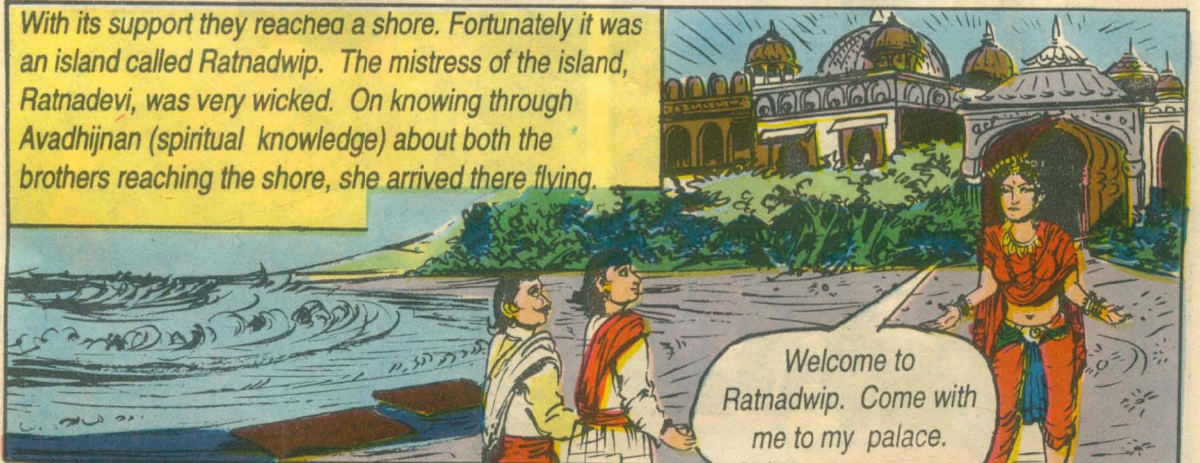
Soon the sea became stormy. The vessel started oscillating like a straw in giant waves.



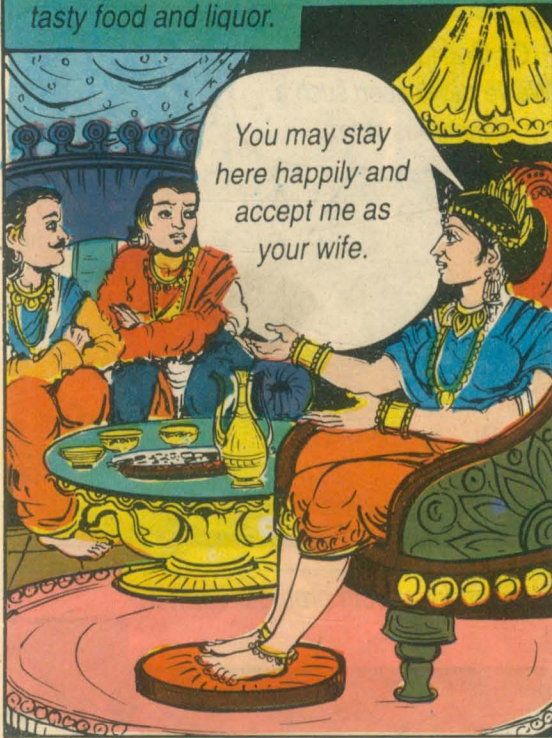
The oscillating vessel collided with a huge rock and was shattered. Both brothers started struggling for their lives. They got hold of a floating log.



With its support they reached a shore. Fortunately it was an island called Ratnadwip. The mistress of the island, Ratnadevi, was very wicked. On knowing through Avadhijnan (spiritual knowledge) about both the brothers reaching the shore, she arrived there flying.



Ratnadevi took them to her palace courteously. She served them tasty food and liquor.



Jinpal and Jinrakshit were shocked to hear this.



Devi threatened them with a naked sword—



Fear forces man to do strange things. Both agreed to Devi's proposal and stayed there with her.



Once Ratnadevi had to go to inspect the Lavan Sea. She called both the brothers and said—

For few days I'm going away. You stay here happily, enjoy yourselves, but take care...



A dangerous snake dwells in the Southern forests of this island, so never go that side. You're free to go in any of the other directions where there are many gardens



The two brothers were plagued by Devi's strict restrictions. They got freedom to move around in her absence.

Brother, let's go to the East first. Today we'll roam freely.



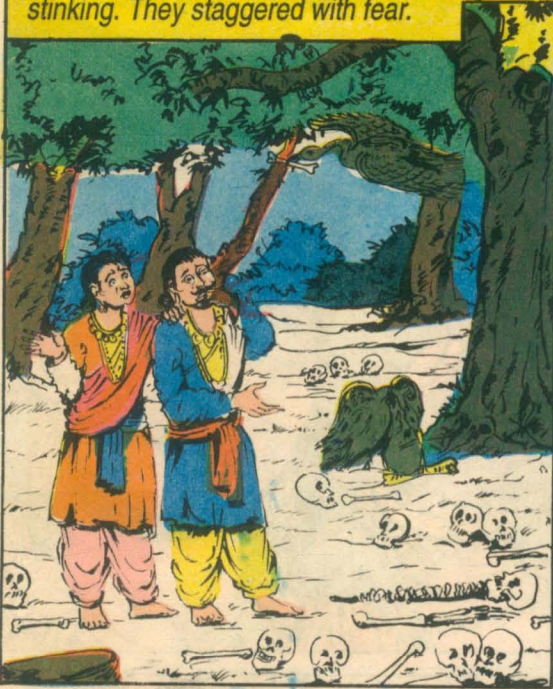
While roaming they remembered what Devi told them and got curious to go to the South.

Jinrakshit, let's go towards the Southern woods and see what's there. She won't come to know as we'll return before she comes back.

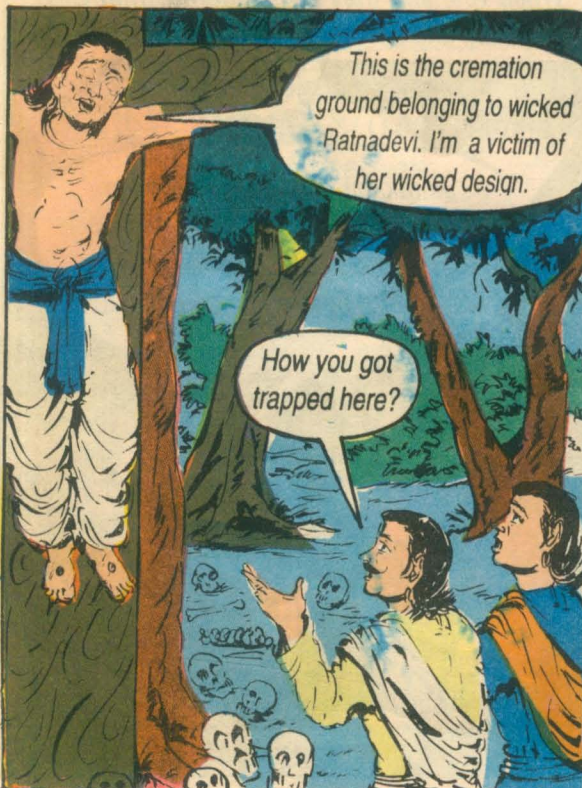


And they both walked towards the South.

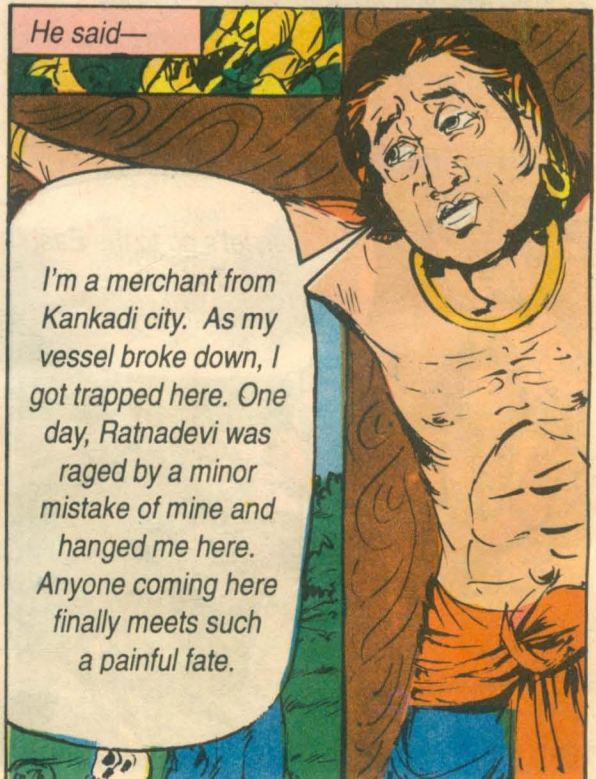
They saw an ominous cremation ground on entering the Southern forest. Bones were scattered everywhere and the area was stinking. They staggered with fear.



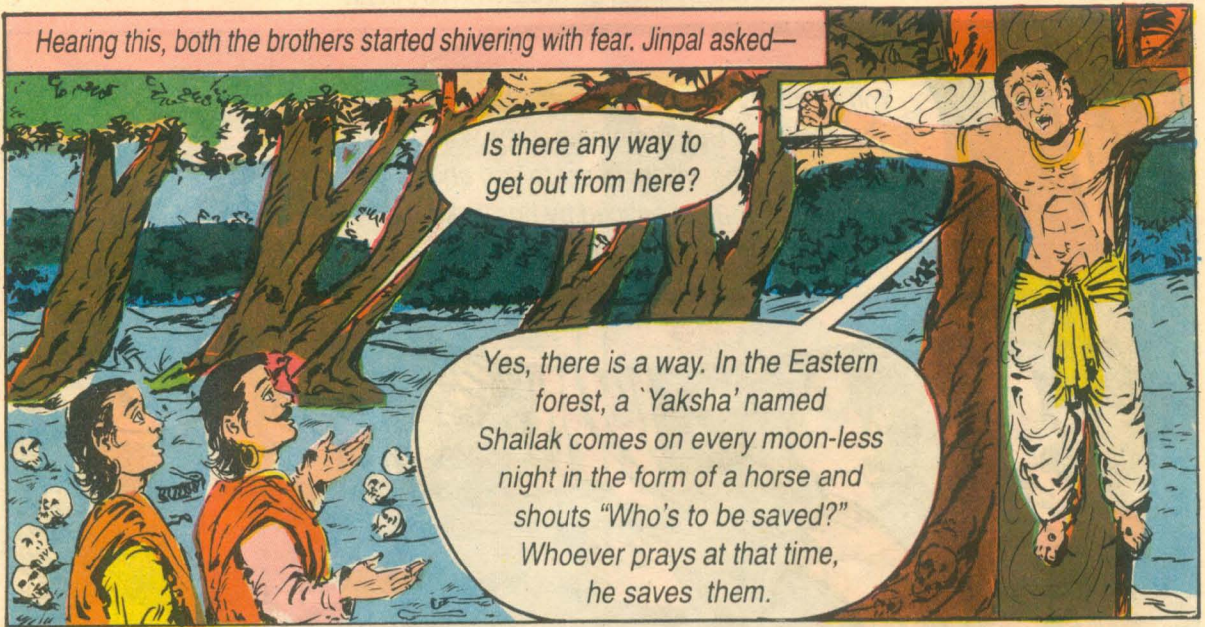
However, curiosity won and they walked on. Ahead, they were surprised to see a man hanging on a cross and screaming with great pain. They went near and asked—



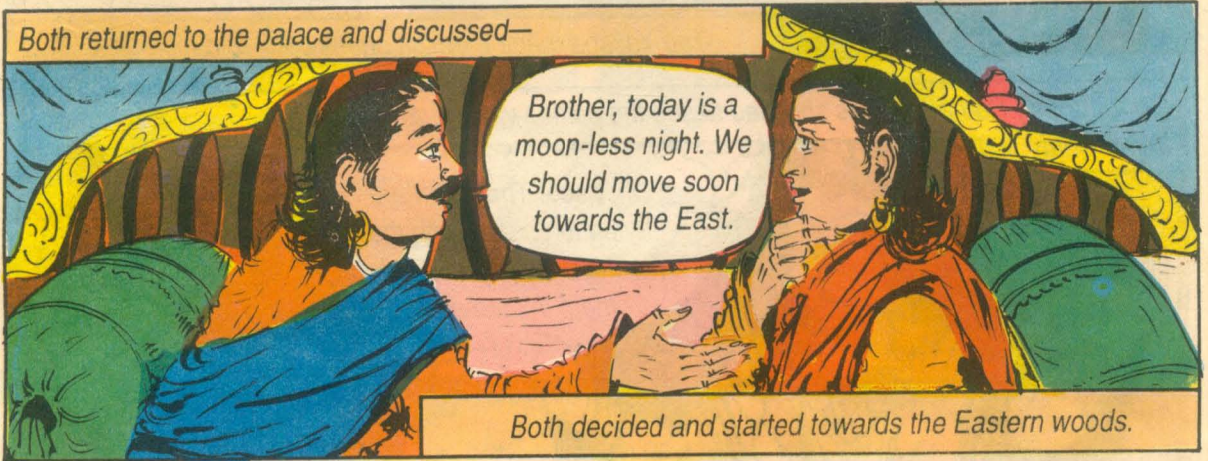
He said—



Hearing this, both the brothers started shivering with fear. Jinpal asked—



Both returned to the palace and discussed—



In a short while, they reached that spot. The Yaksha, in the form of a horse, appeared at the usual time and said—



Yaksha said—

You sit on my back. I'll take you to your place safely. But remember, Devi will chase you. She will try to scare you and lure you. If you get enticed by her tricks and turn to her, I'll throw you from my back into the sea.

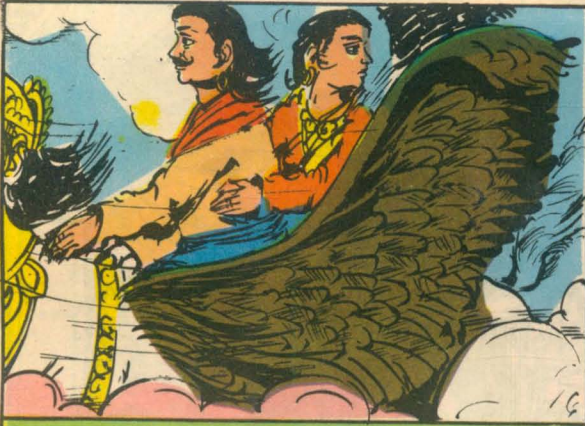
The Yaksha made them sit on his back and took off—

On returning, Ratnadevi was shocked to see the palace vacant. She used her 'Avadhijan'.

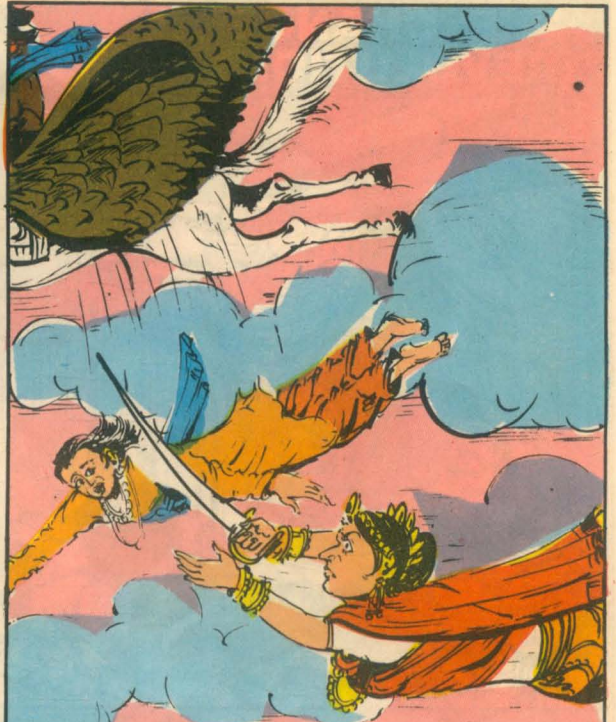
Oh, I see. They both are trying to escape with the Yaksha's help ! I must stop them immediately.

Ratnadevi chased them. She called them charmingly—

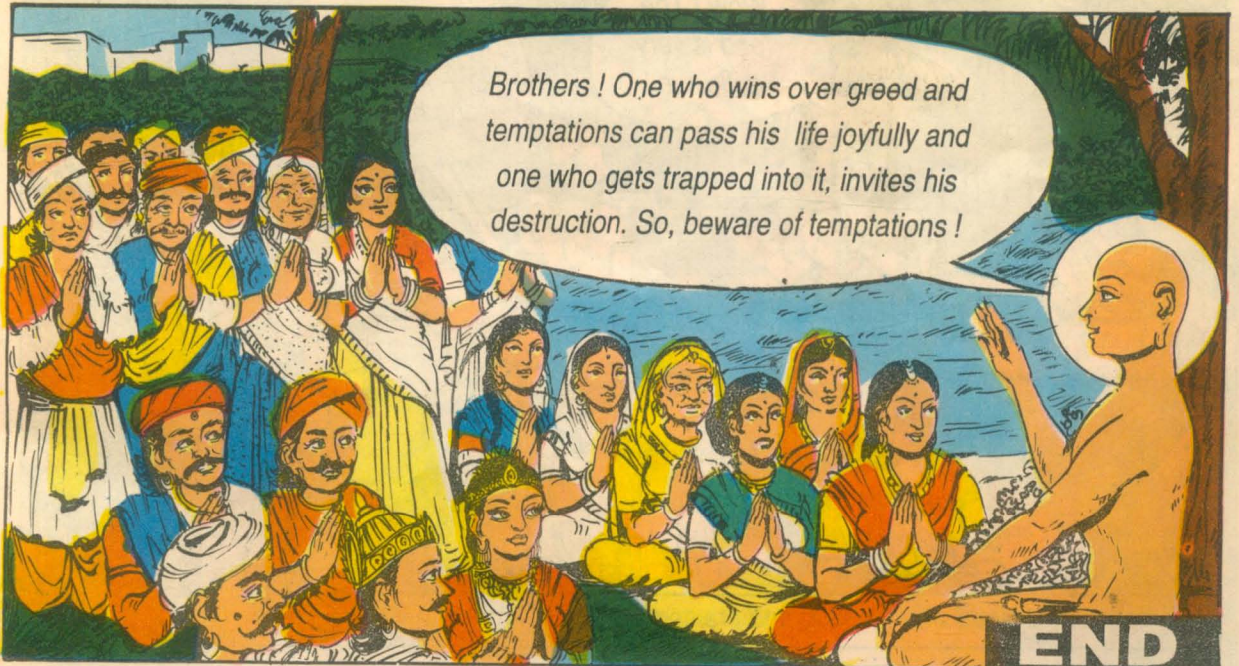
Darling, please don't leave me. I can't live without you. I'll remain your slave forever.



Jinpal didn't attend to Devi's tricks. He sat calm and undisturbed. But Jinrakshit was moved. As soon as he turned towards Devi, the Yaksha threw him down from his back.



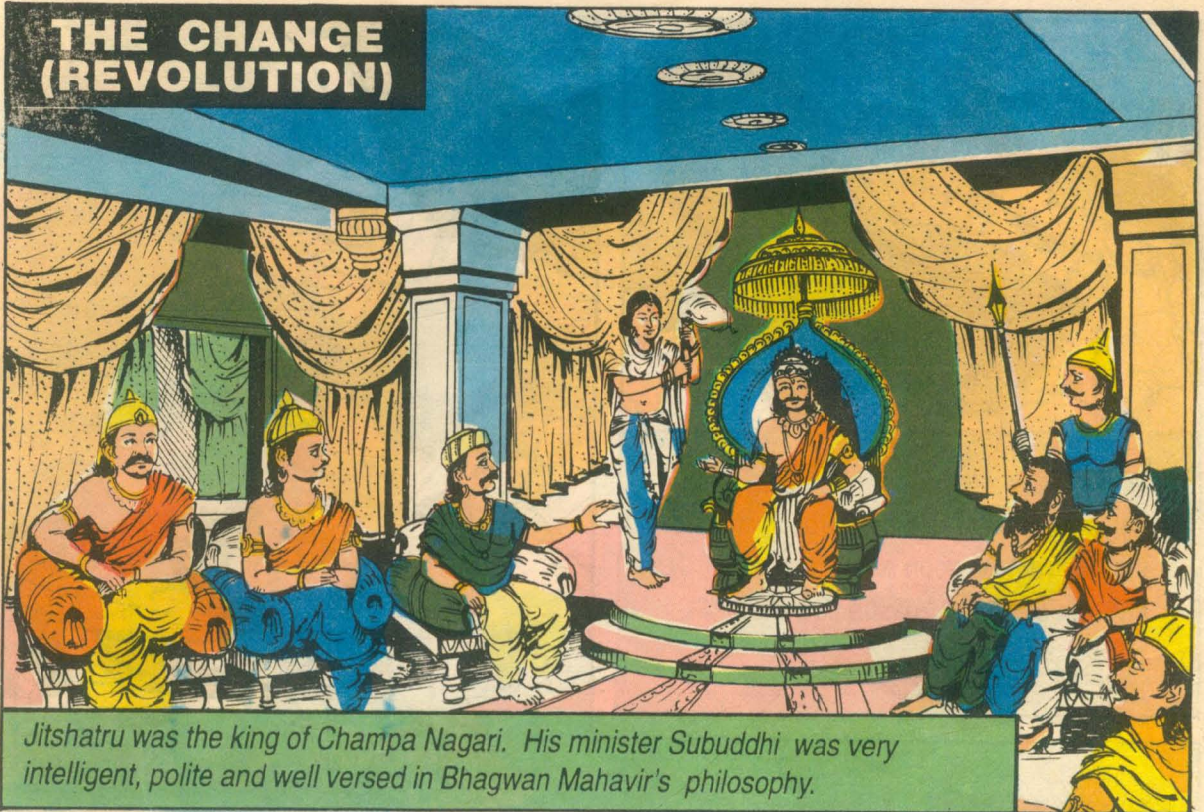
Furious Devi killed Jinrakshit instantly cutting him into pieces by her sword before he fell into the sea. Jinpal reached his home safely



Brothers ! One who wins over greed and temptations can pass his life joyfully and one who gets trapped into it, invites his destruction. So, beware of temptations !

END

THE CHANGE (REVOLUTION)



Jitshatru was the king of Champa Nagari. His minister Subuddhi was very intelligent, polite and well versed in Bhagwan Mahavir's philosophy.

Once the king accompanied his ministerial cabinet to a meal.

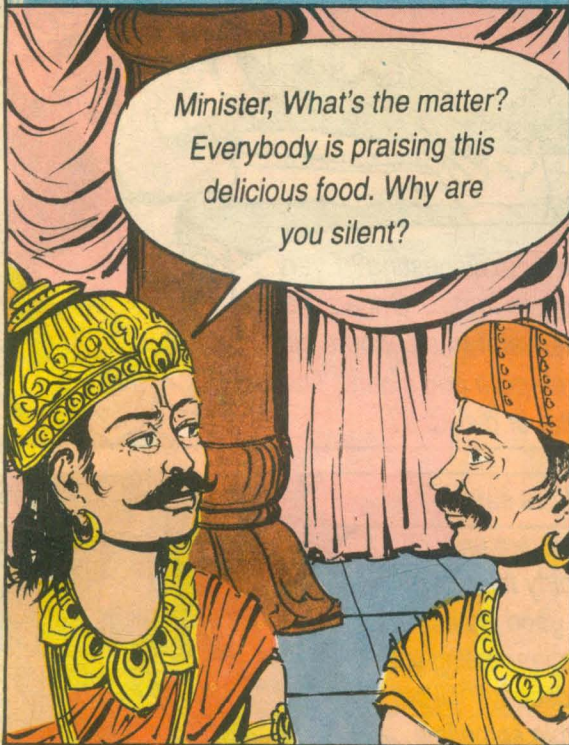


Wow ! The food is very delicious !

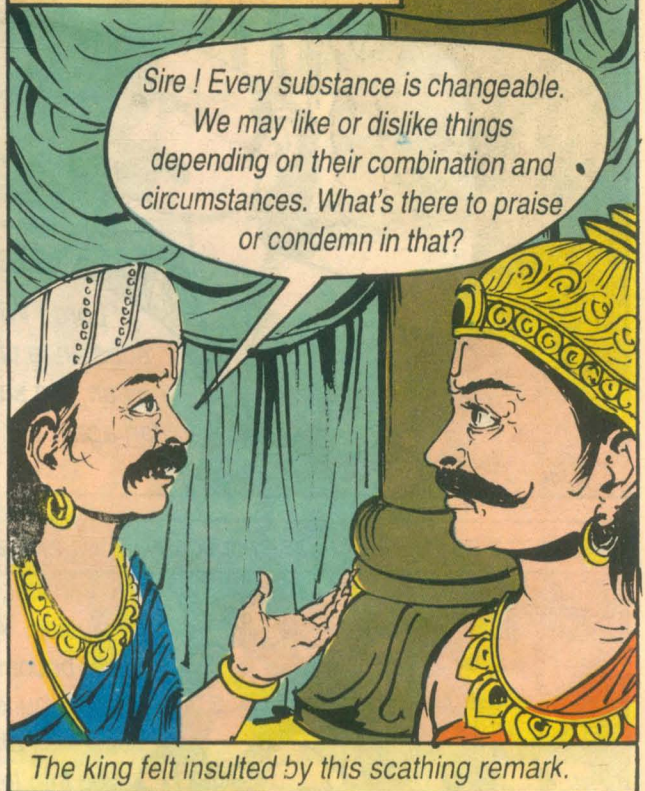
Yes Lord ! It's very tasty. Everyone is liking his fingers.

Others also agreed with the king and praised the food.

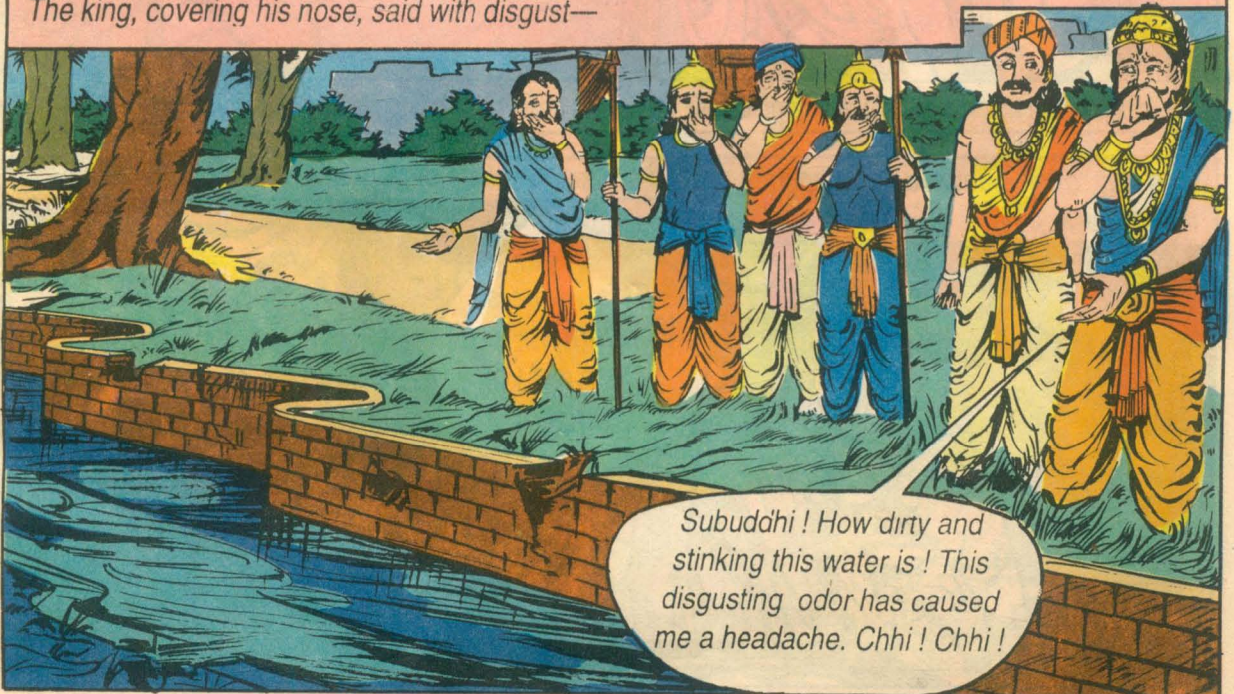
But Subuddhi kept quiet. The king was surprised. He asked Subuddhi—



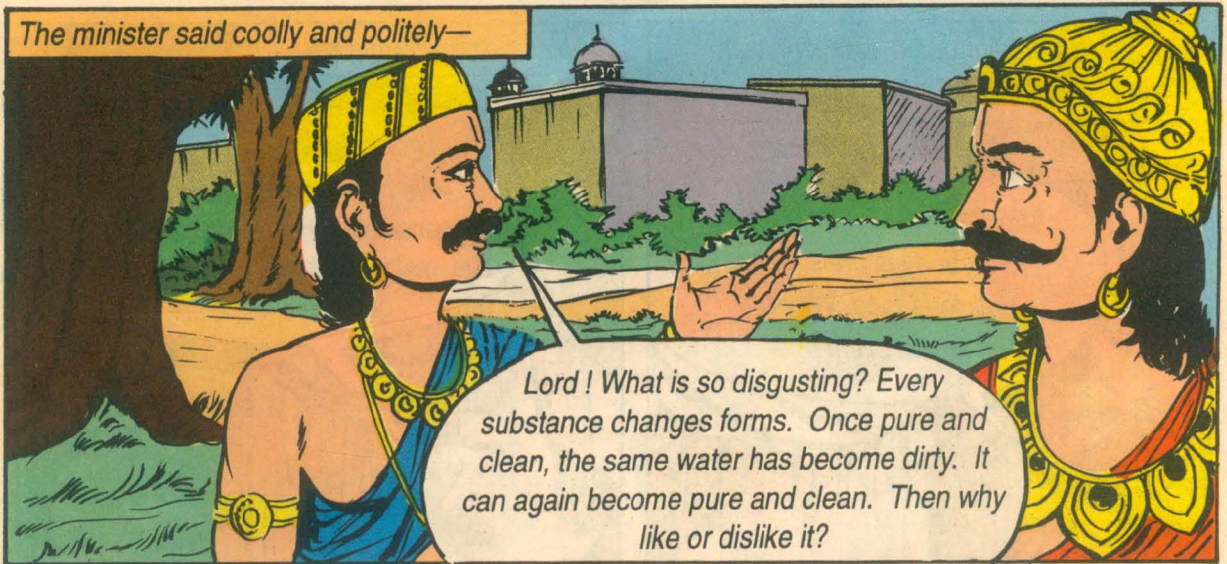
Minister said impartially—



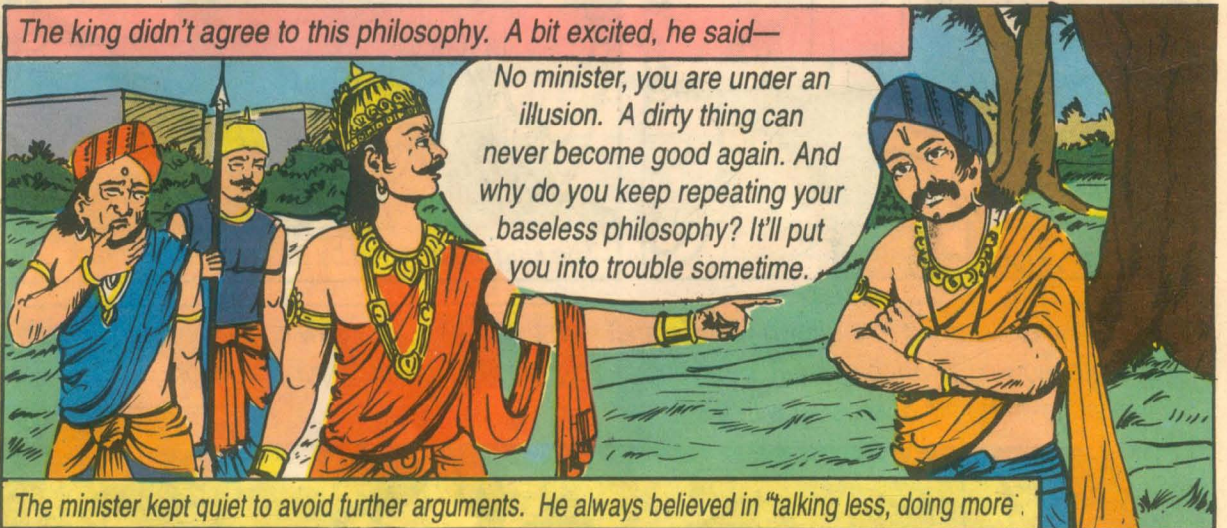
Once Jitshatru went out of the town with Cabinet members. There they saw badly stinking fetid and filthy water flowing through a canal. Everybody was offended by the unpleasant odor. The king, covering his nose, said with disgust—



The minister said coolly and politely—

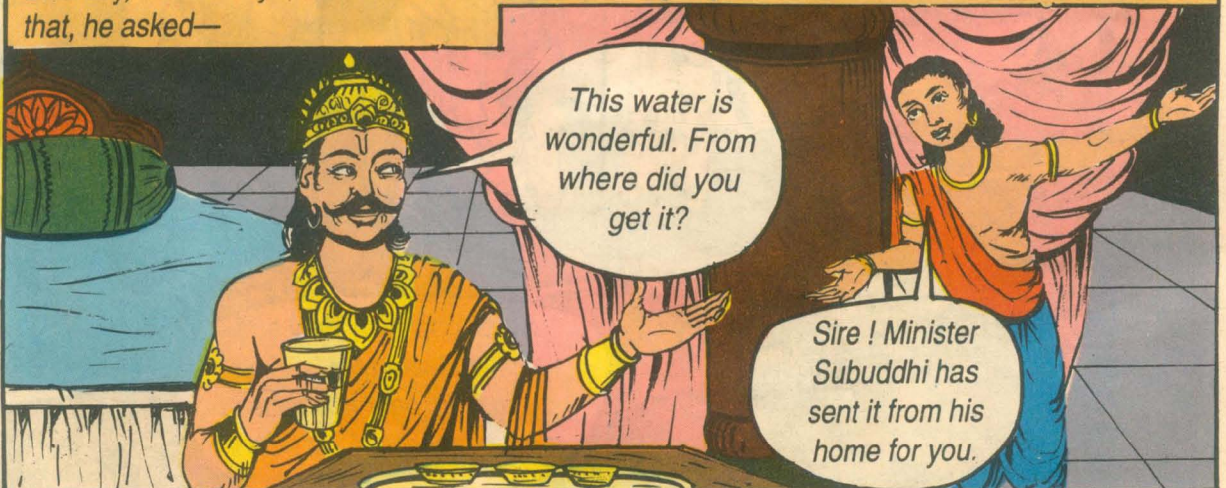


The king didn't agree to this philosophy. A bit excited, he said—



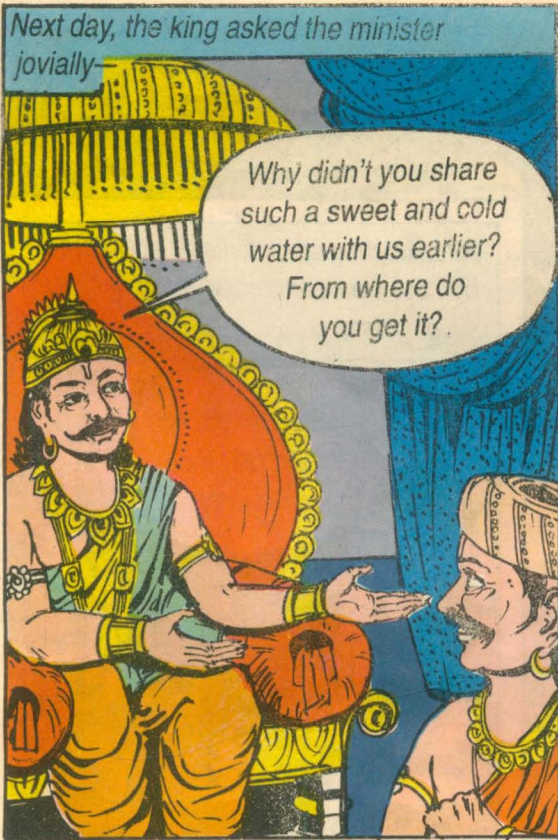
The minister kept quiet to avoid further arguments. He always believed in "talking less, doing more".

One day, after many weeks a servant served the king a glass of very sweet, cold water. Drinking that, he asked—

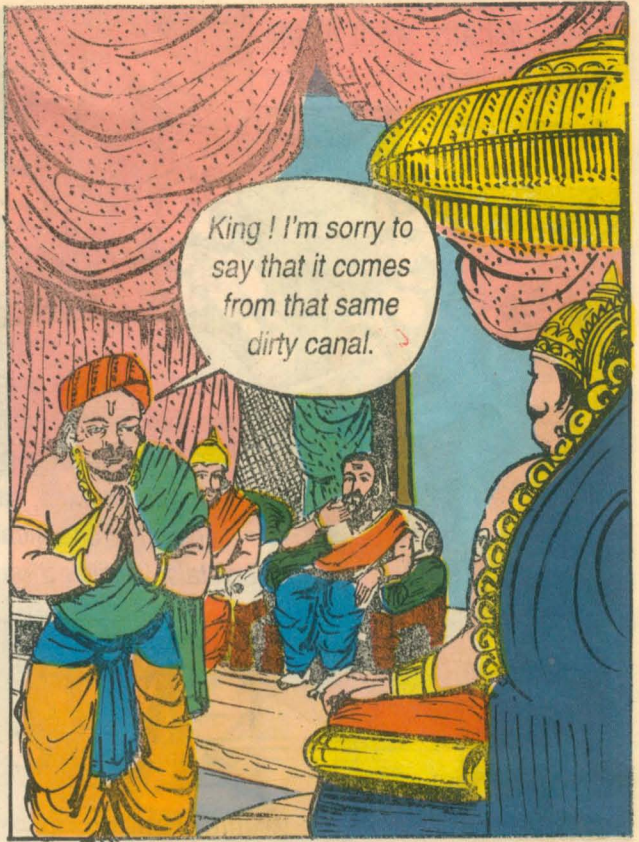


Next day, the king asked the minister jovially—

Why didn't you share such a sweet and cold water with us earlier? From where do you get it?

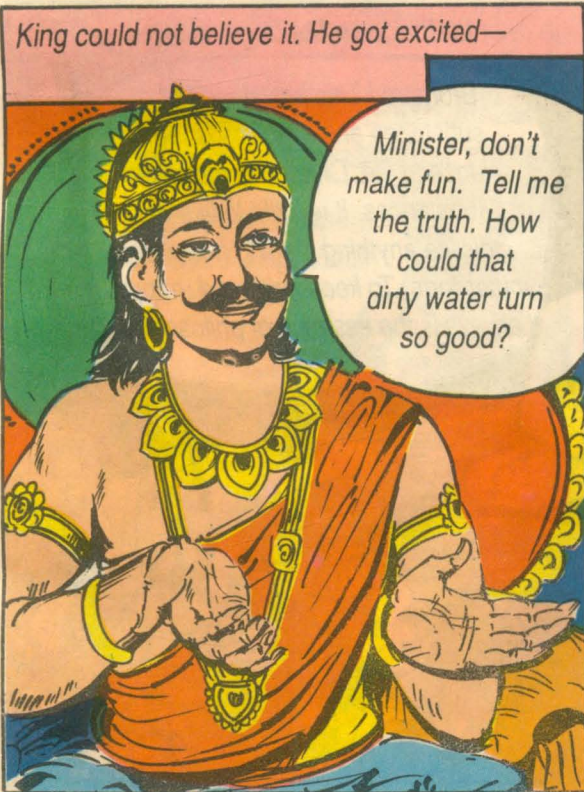


King ! I'm sorry to say that it comes from that same dirty canal.

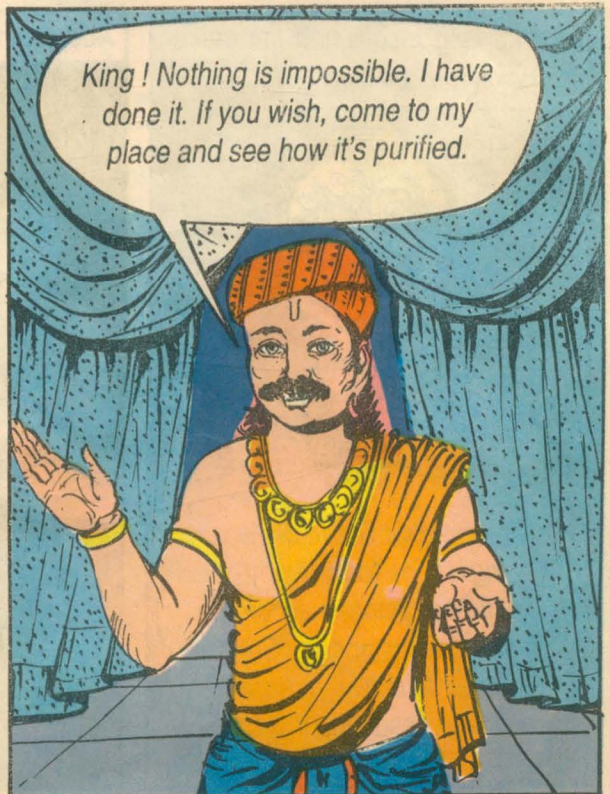


King could not believe it. He got excited—

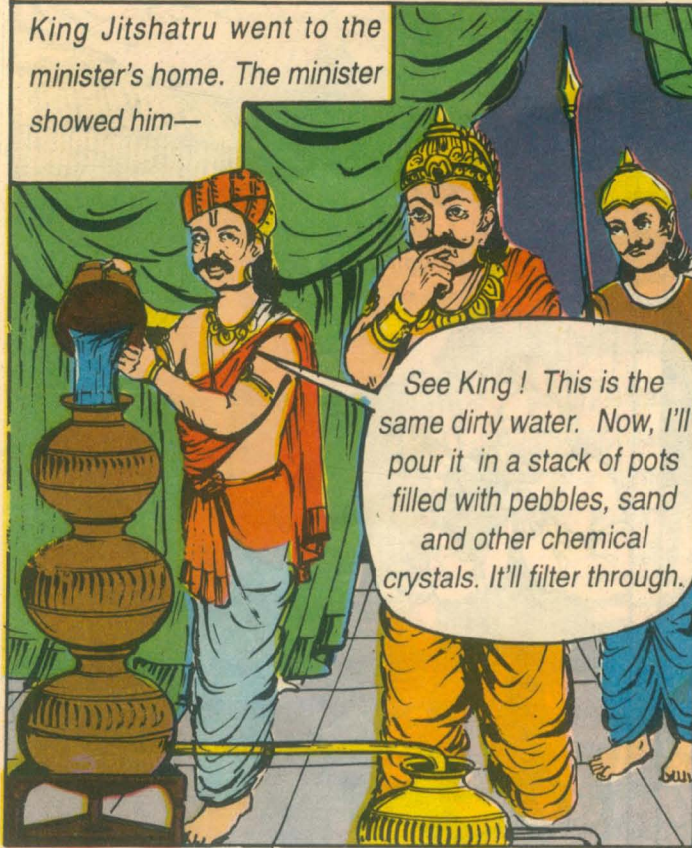
Minister, don't make fun. Tell me the truth. How could that dirty water turn so good?



King ! Nothing is impossible. I have done it. If you wish, come to my place and see how it's purified.



King Jitshatru went to the minister's home. The minister showed him—



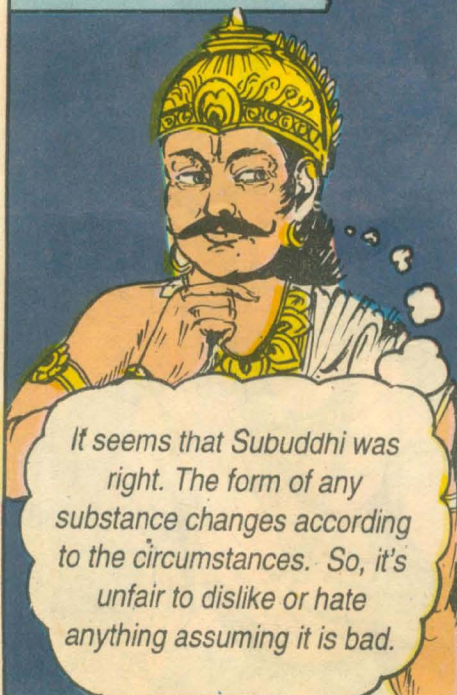
See King ! This is the same dirty water. Now, I'll pour it in a stack of pots filled with pebbles, sand and other chemical crystals. It'll filter through.

After filtering, the minister presented him the clean and scented water in a silver glass.



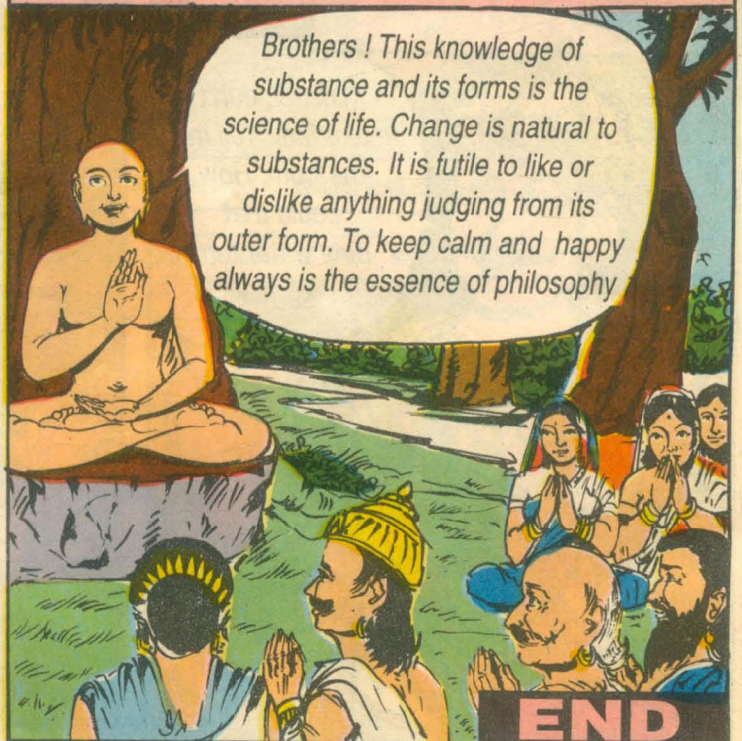
Sir ! Take this and feel the difference.

Now the king recollected the earlier discussion with the Minister.



It seems that Subuddhi was right. The form of any substance changes according to the circumstances. So, it's unfair to dislike or hate anything assuming it is bad.

Addressing the people Bhagwan Mahavir said—

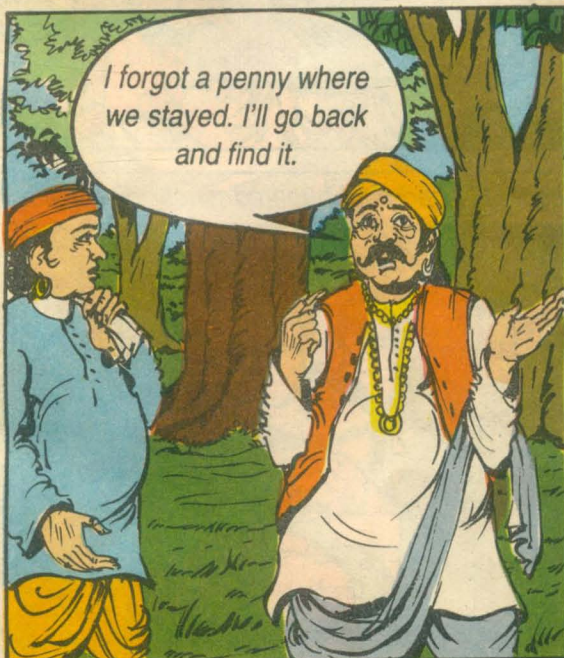


Brothers ! This knowledge of substance and its forms is the science of life. Change is natural to substances. It is futile to like or dislike anything judging from its outer form. To keep calm and happy always is the essence of philosophy

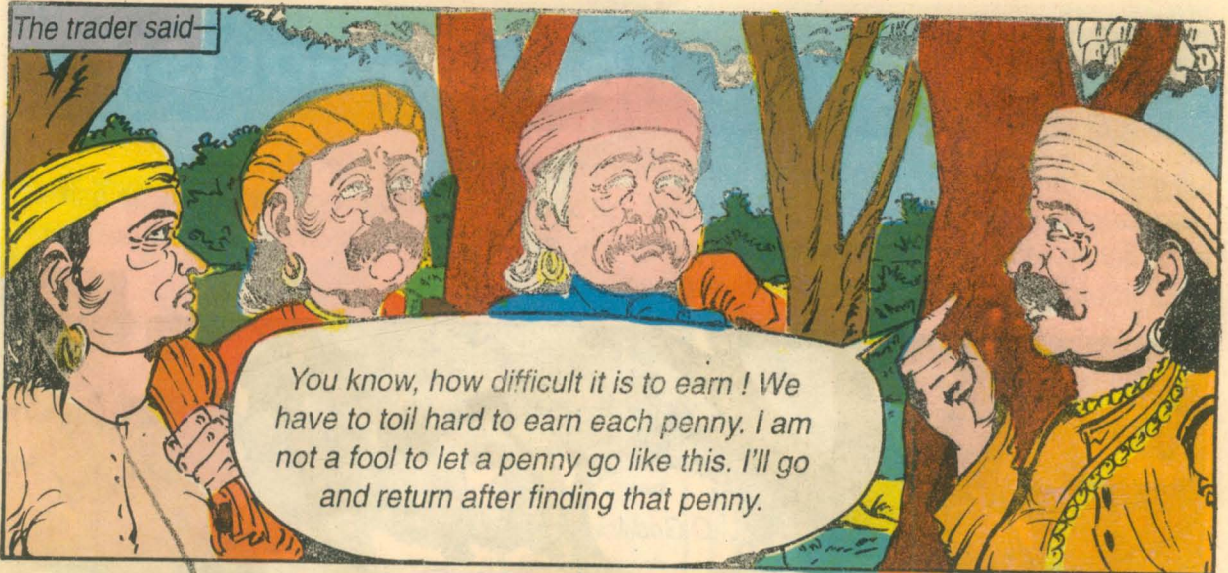
END

PENNY WISE POUND FOOLISH

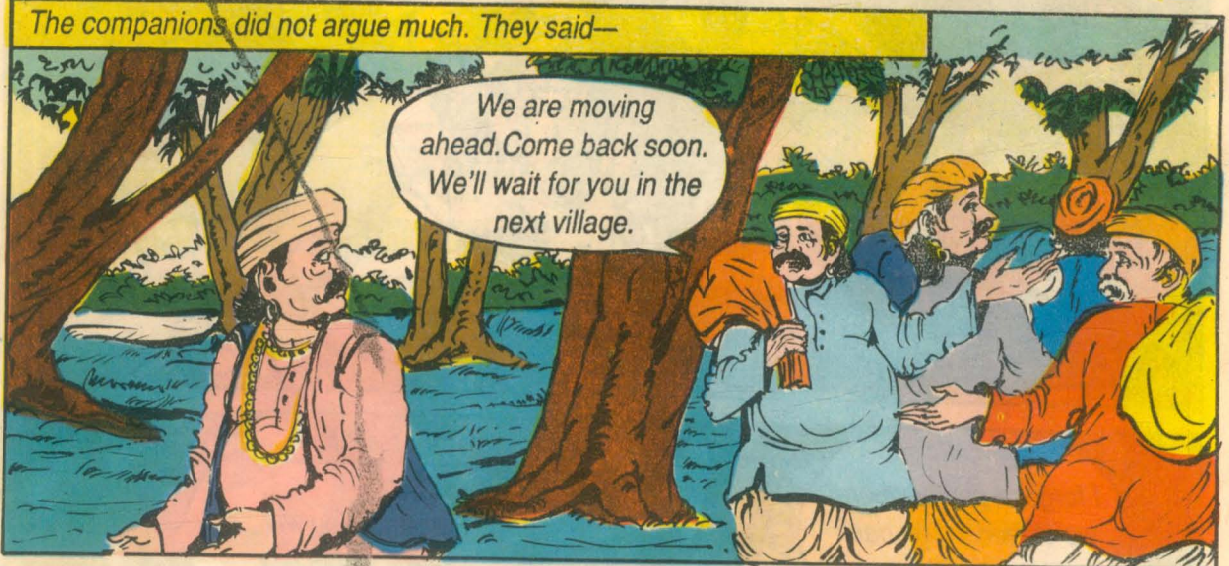
A trader was returning from abroad with his earning of one thousand gold-coins. He exchanged one gold-coin for eighty pennies. He spent one penny every day. Finally he had one penny left. He forgot this last penny where he stayed in a village on his way. He realised this when he went ahead. He told his companions—



The trader said—



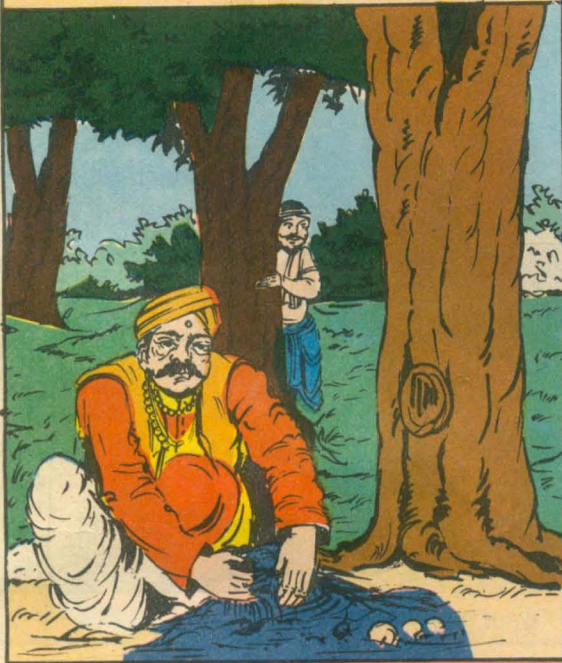
The companions did not argue much. They said—



The companions moved ahead. The trader started back. He had nine hundred ninety nine gold-coins. He thought—



He checked that no one was watching him. He dug a small pit below a tree and hid the bag containing gold-coins and covered it with sand.



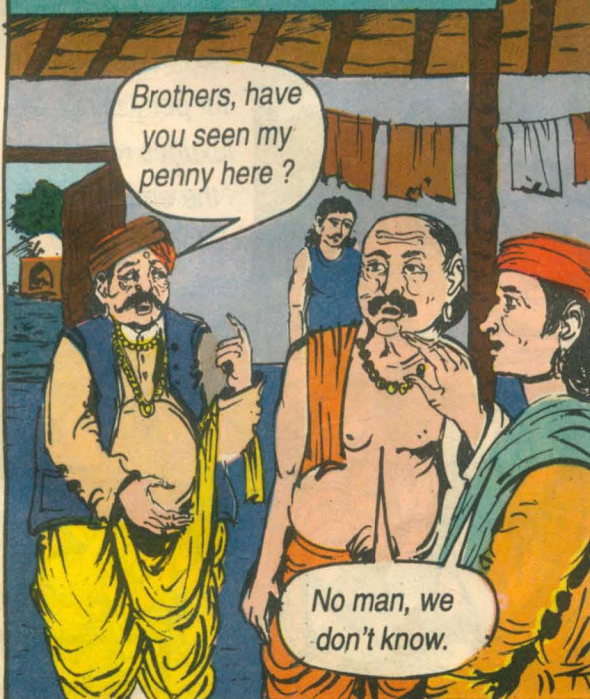
After marking the tree he started for the village.

A person was watching all this. He came and dug out the gold-coins. He was delighted—



He took home the treasure.

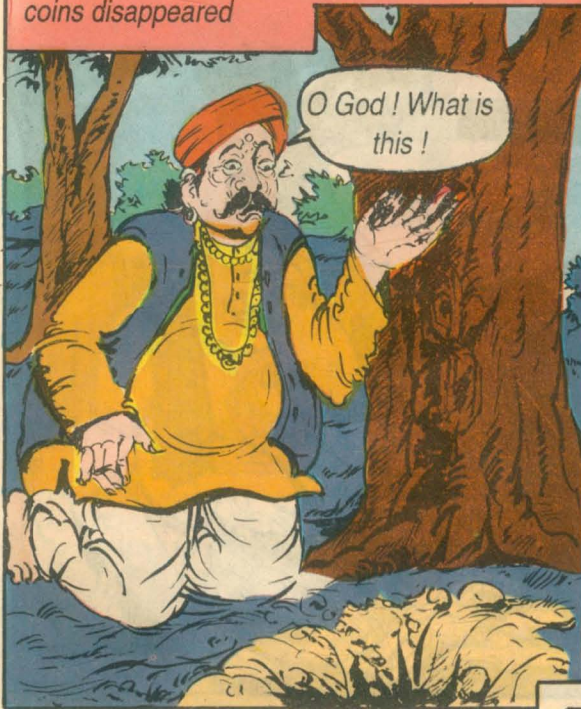
The trader went to the place where he stayed and inquired—



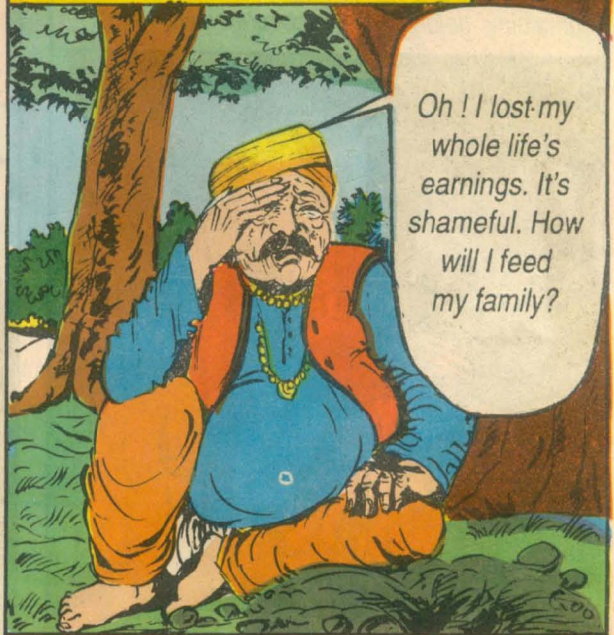
He got tired searching for the penny till evening.



Disappointed, he returned. On reaching the tree, he was stunned to see the pit dug and the gold-coins disappeared



He was frustrated. He started repenting on his own foolishness.

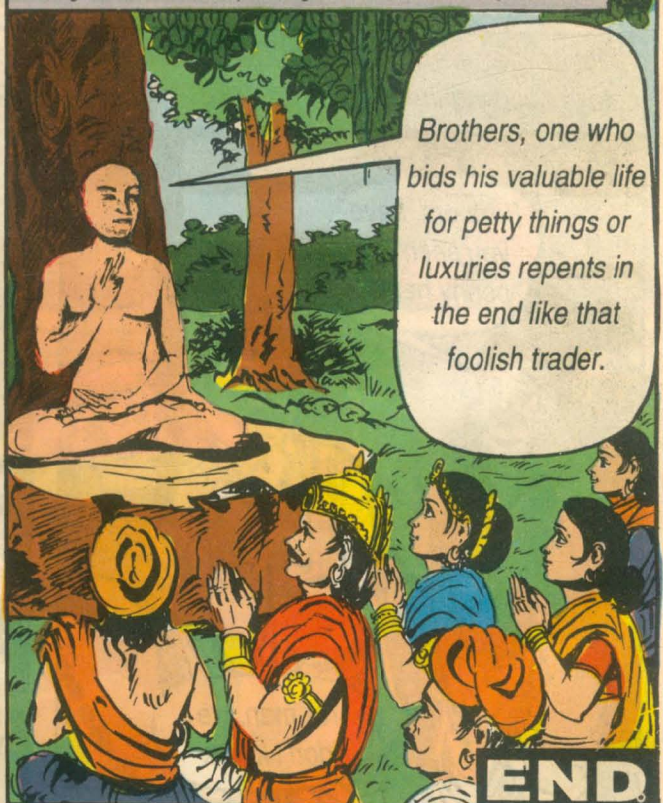


He wept and cursed himself.

When he met his companions, everyone started scolding him.



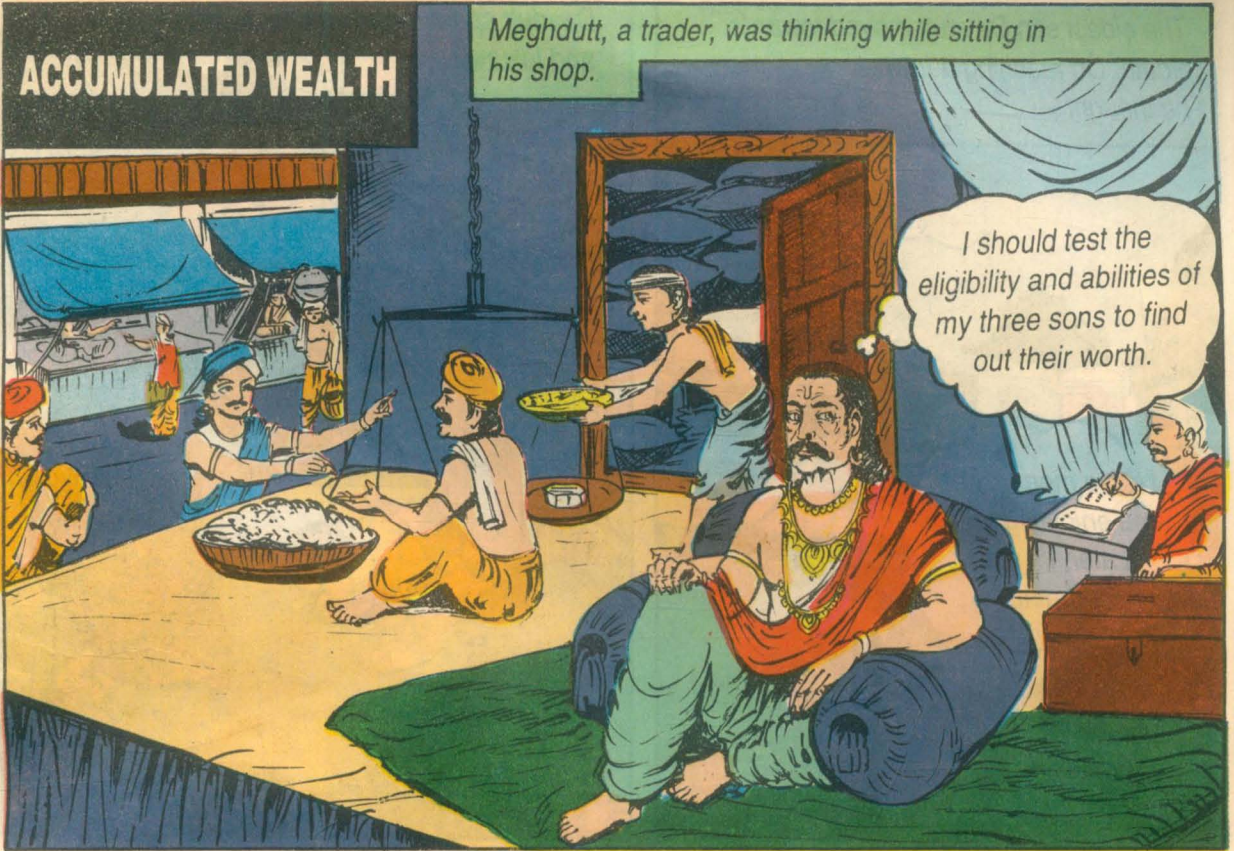
Bhagwan Mahavir, explaining the crux of the story, said—



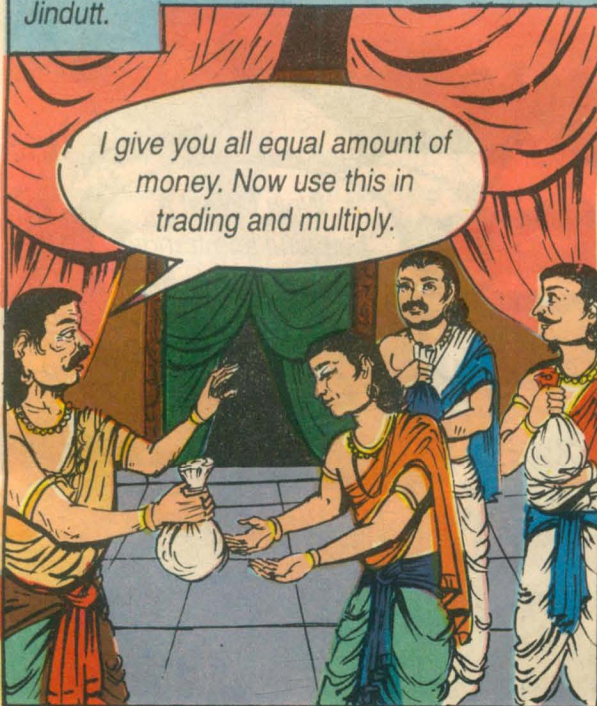
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ACCUMULATED WEALTH

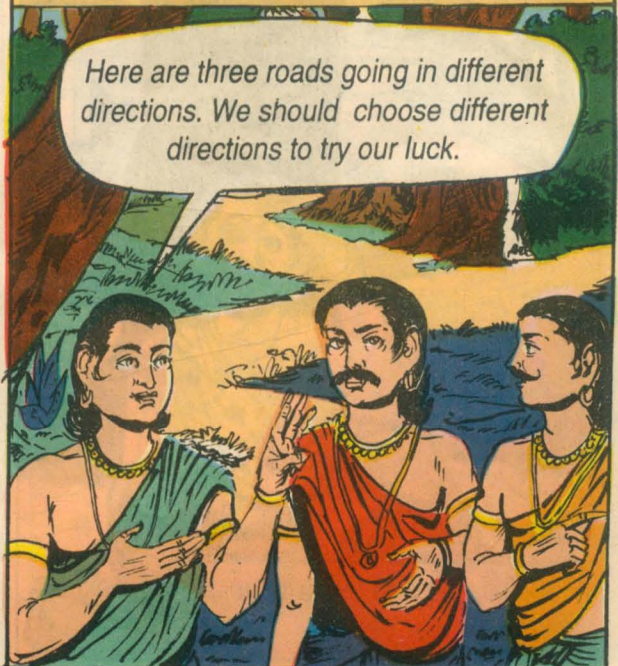
Meghdutt, a trader, was thinking while sitting in his shop.



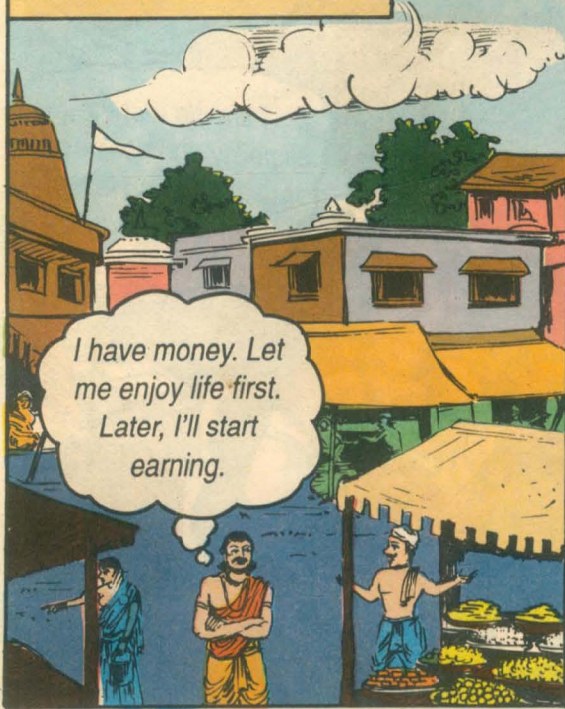
He gave one thousand gold-coins each to his three sons Devdutt, Shivdutt and Jindutt.



The sons set out with the money to other towns. On their way, they stopped for a while and decided—



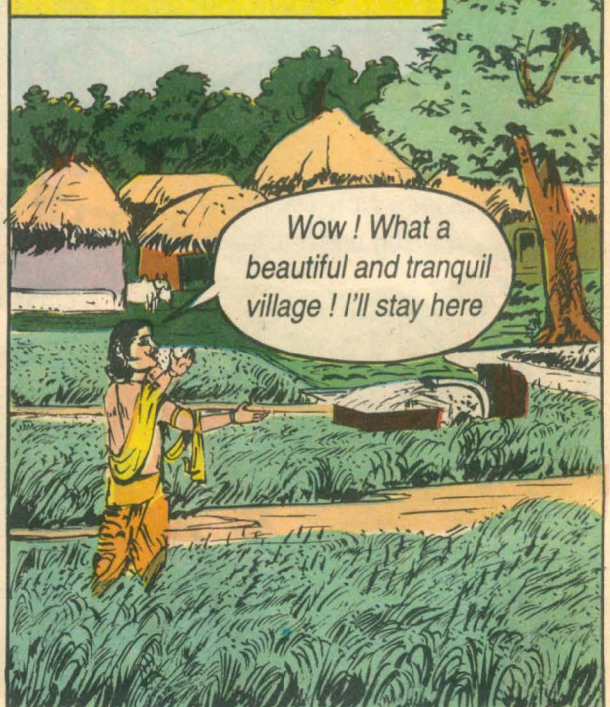
The eldest son Devdutt moved towards South. On reaching a town, he thought —



Devdutt spent extravagantly in enjoyments and luxuries.



The second son Shividutt, walking towards the West, reached a village.



Gradually, he was left with no money.



Shivdutt bought a shop there and started business of lending money on interest.



The income of interest provided him a comfortable living.



The third son Jindutt was very intelligent. He bought a cartful of grain from a farmer at very cheap rates.



The farmer brought the goods to the grain market of the town.



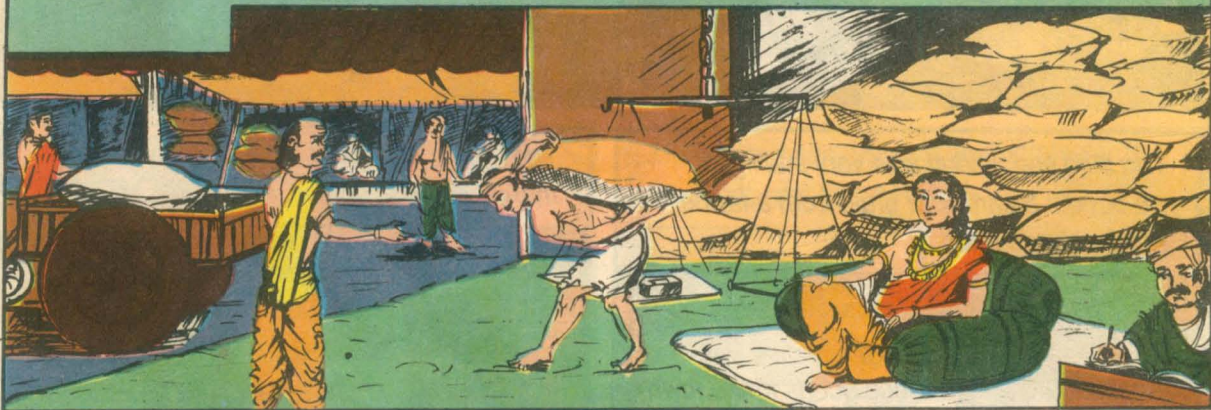
Jindutt talked to the brokers.



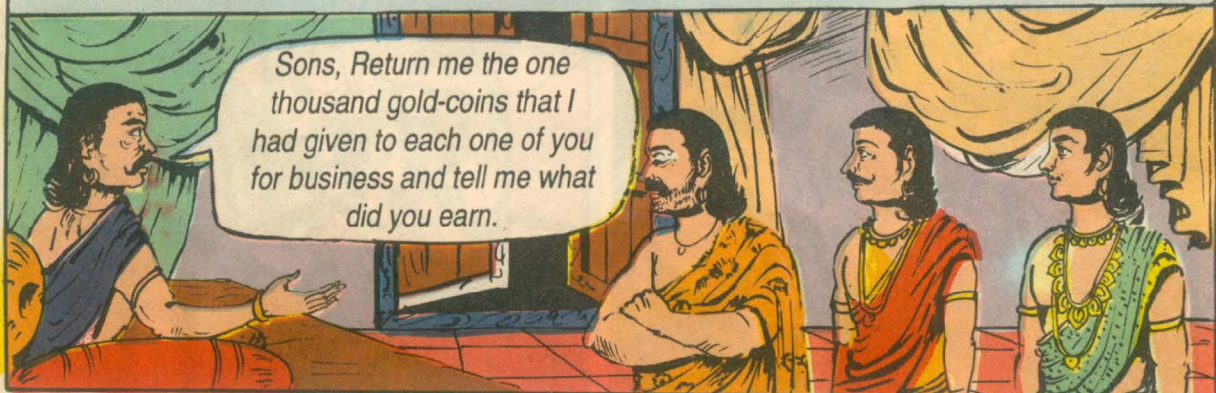
His stock was sold at double rates.



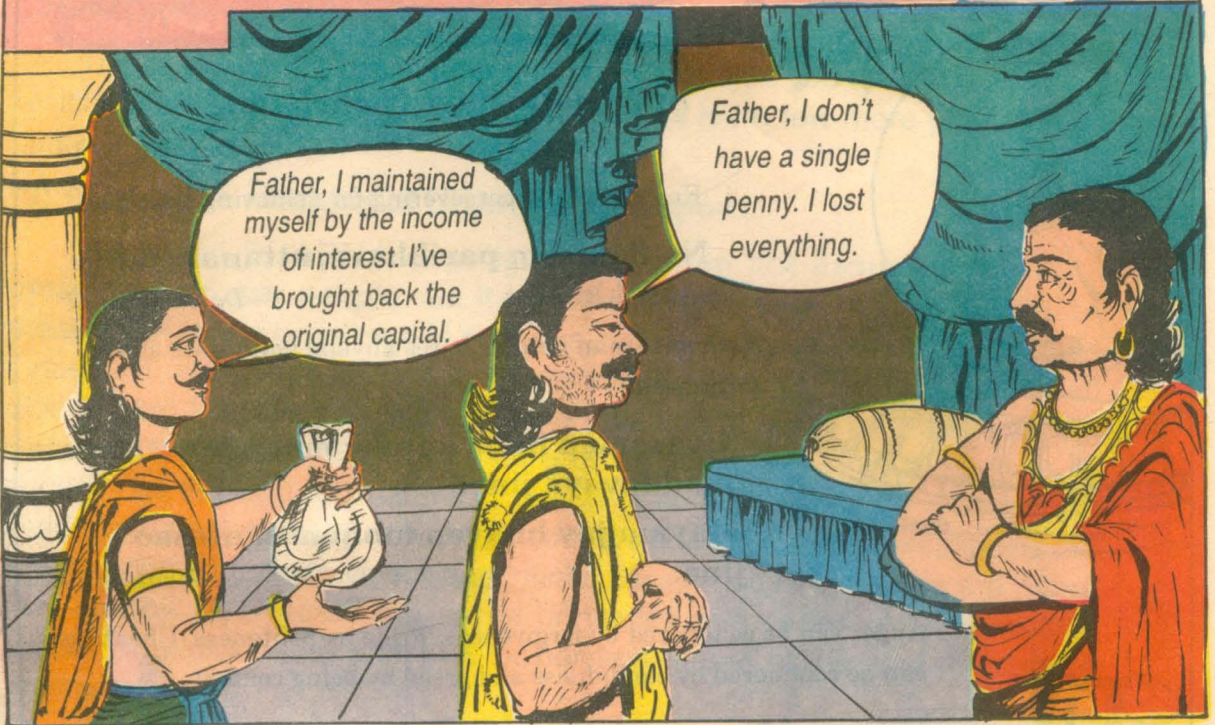
In a few days, Jindutt established a big shop in the town. His trading of goods brought from villages earned him very good profit. His capital was multiplied many times.



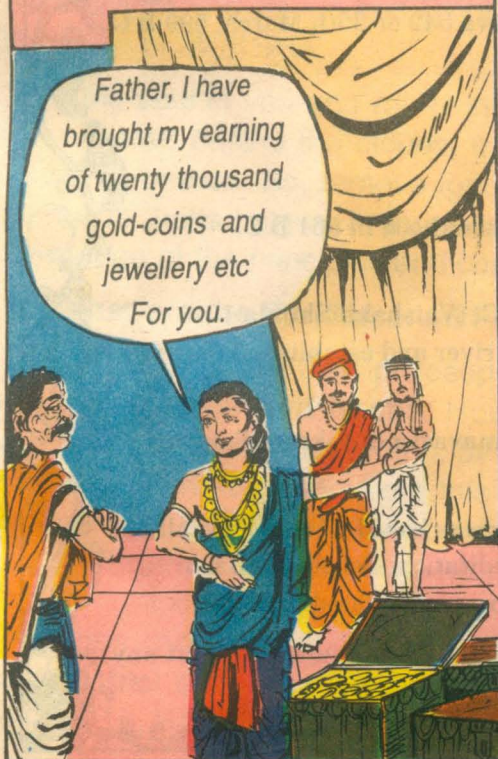
After two years, the three brothers returned home. Their father Meghdutt was pleased to see them back. After letting them relax, he called them all and said—



Devdutt, the eldest son, started narrating his pities. Shivdutt returned his original capital.

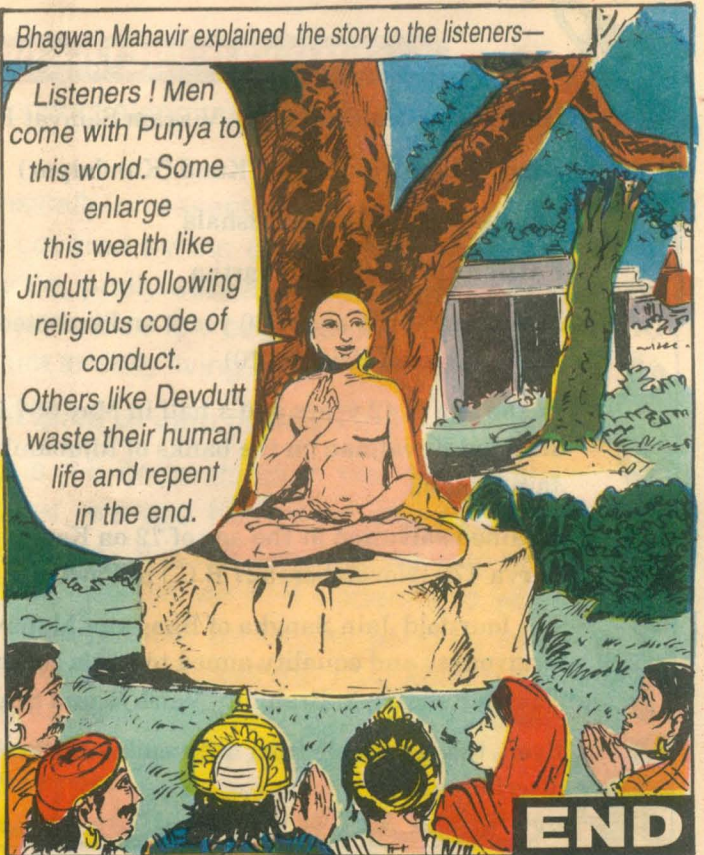


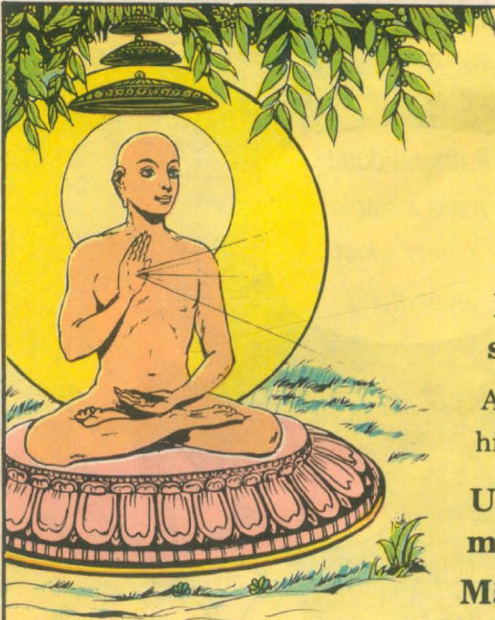
Jindutt gifted his father a lot of money and precious things and said—



Bhagwan Mahavir explained the story to the listeners—

Listeners ! Men come with Punya to this world. Some enlarge this wealth like Jindutt by following religious code of conduct. Others like Devdutt waste their human life and repent in the end.





IMMORTAL TEACHINGS OF BHAGWAN MAHAVIR

Appamatto Jaye Nichcham.

—Dashvai. 8/16

Keep carefully persevering for achieving your goal.

Na Bāhiram paribhave, attanam na samukkase.

—Dashvai. 8/37

A wise man neither hates anyone nor boasts about himself.

Uvasamen hane koham maanam maddavayā jine.

Māymajjav bhāven lobham santosao jine.

—Dashvai. 8/39

Anger can be conquered by forgiveness. Pride by politeness. Cheating can be conquered by candidness and greed by being content.

LANDMARKS IN THE LIFE OF BHAGWAN MAHAVIR

Birth : Chaitra Shukla 13, Vikram Samvat Purva 542 or 30th March, 599 B.C.

Birth Place : Kshatriya Kund (Kundalpur)

Mother : Priyakarini Trishala

Father : Maharaj Siddhartha

Left home at the age of 30 years and accepted monkhood in 561 B.C. (Margashirsha Krishna 10)

At the age of 42 years and a half in May 557 B.C. (Vaishakh Shukla 10) attained Kevaljnan on the banks of Rijubaluka river and established four-fold Jain Sangha.

Attained salvation at the age of 72 on Kartik Amavasya of Vikram Samvat Purva 470 (November, 527 B.C.) in Pawapuri.

The four-fold Jain Sangha of Bhagwan Mahavir was based on the principles of forgiveness and equality aimed towards self-meditation. People of all four classes Kshatriya, Brahmin, Vaishya and Shudra participated in it.

Even today, people from different castes are practising Jainism without any discrimination.

Dear friends,

This is the third issue in your hands. By this time you must have started reciting NAMOKAR MANTRA regularly. Let us learn few more points about Jainism.

(9) What is the meaning of DHARMA or religion?

The word DHARMA or religion has often not assumed the right meaning by many people. So it is imperative to explain what DHARMA means. DHARMA or religion is neither a cult nor a creed; nor is it a reserved system of any community. It is an essential nature of an individual or an object. Lord Mahavir has explained the meaning of DHARMA as : **“Vatthu Sahavo Dhammo”**, “The real nature of an object.” Just as the nature of sugar is sweet and the nature of lemon is sour in the same manner the essential nature or the quality of the soul is infinite knowledge, infinite vision, infinite conduct, infinite vigour and infinite bliss. Thus DHARMA is the name that can be given to all the set of principles and codes of conduct that enable an individual to attain his or her true nature of the soul through its practices.

(10) What do Jains believe?

The Jains believe that the three Jewels of the three-fold path of Right Belief, Right Knowledge and Right Conduct alone purify the soul and lead to liberation or MOKSHA.

This soul in you and me is intrinsically or essentially pure. But like the sun covered behind the clouds, it is covered by the clouds of its own self-bound ignorance. So, remove ignorance, purify soul and realise the self. In short, the Jains believe in three-fold path, that is : belief in Jain principles, knowledge of the principles and conduct in daily living by the principles.

(11) What are the Fundamental Principles of Jain philosophy?

At the heart of Jain philosophy is the understanding that the soul is intrinsically free and happy. However, we are bound to the cycle of reincarnation, death and rebirth, by KARMAS. It is the aim of Jainism to help the soul attain liberation from this cycle. Unless we first understand what soul is, what KARMA is and how they are related, we cannot become free. Lord Mahavir said that there is no right conduct without the right knowledge and no right knowledge without the right belief. Jain philosophy scientifically describes the existence of the soul in the universe by identifying nine fundamental principles. These are JIVA, AJIVA, PUNYA, PĀPA, ASRAVA, SAMVARA, BANDHA, NIRJARA and MOKSHA.

(12) What is the meaning of each principle?

(a) **JIVA** means that which has life or consciousness and feels pain or pleasure like plants, worms, ants, flies, birds, animals, human-beings etc. As we feel pain and pleasure, every living form feels the same.

(b) **AJIVA** means that which is devoid of life or consciousness. For example table, chair, pencil, T.V., car, toys etc.

(c) **PUNYA** is the name of those good thoughts, words and actions which lead to the inflow of good KARMAS that bring happiness and comfort to the JIVA.

(d) **PĀPA** is the name of those bad thoughts, words and actions which lead to the inflow of bad KARMAS that result in unhappiness, discomfort, pain and suffering.

(e) **ASRAVA** means the inflow of good KARMAS or bad KARMAS that lead to the bondage of the soul. In short, ASRAVA may be described as attraction of the JIVA towards sense-objects that causes the inflow of good or bad KARMAS.

(f) **SAMVARA** means to stop the inflow of new KARMAS into the soul. It is just the opposite of ASRAVA. SAMVARA can be attained by engaging the mind, speech and body in meditation, by conquering sensual desires, by purity and truthfulness of speech and by forgiveness.

(g) **BANDHA** is the principle that binds the soul and KARMA together. When the soul feels attraction and repulsion towards sense-objects, KARMA particles are attracted to it and shrouds its true nature.

(h) **NIRJARA** is the shedding of these KARMA particles. After the effect of a particular KARMA particle has been once produced, it is discharged and purged off the soul. The best way to shed them is by burning them up in the glow of austerities i.e. Tāpa.

(i) **MOKSHA** is the ninth or the last principle. MOKSHA means complete liberation. When the soul is freed from all bondage of KARMA it gets released from the cycle of birth and death. It then attains MOKSHA and becomes a Siddha or a perfect soul. There is no returning again to a worldly state.

Jai Jinendra
Pramoda Chitrabhanu

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Mahatma
NO RELIGION OF THE WORLD
HAS EXPLAINED THE
PRINCIPLE OF AHIMSA SO
DEEPLY AND
SYSTEMATICALLY AS
DISCUSSED, WITH ITS
APPLICABILITY IN LIFE, IN
JAINISM. AS AND WHEN THIS
BENEVOLENT PRINCIPLE OF
AHIMSA WILL BE SOUGHT FOR
PRACTICE BY THE PEOPLE OF
THE WORLD TO ACHIEVE
THEIR ENDS OF LIFE IN THIS
WORLD AND BEYOND, JAINISM
IS SURE TO HAVE THE
UPPERMOST STATUS AND
BHAGWAN MAHAVIR IS SURE
TO BE RESPECTED AS THE
GREATEST AUTHORITY ON
AHIMSA. *Mahatma*

—MAHATMA MOHANDAS
KARAMCHAND GANDHI
(INDIA)